Apples of Gold

FOR *J. Phillips*

Young men and Women:

AND

A CROWN of GLORY for Old Men and Women.

OR,

The happiness of being good betimes, And the honour of being an Old Disciple.

Clearly and fully discovered, and closely and faithfully applyed.

ALSO

The Young mans Objections answered, And the Old Mans Doubts resolved.

By *THOMAS BROOKS* heretofore Preacher of the Gospel at St. *Margarets* New *Fish-Street-hill.*

The Eleventh Edition.

But I thy Servant fear the Lord from my youth, 1 King 18 12.

The hoary Head is a crown of Glory, if it be found in the way of Righteousness, Prov. 16. 31.

London, Printed for *John Hancock*, and are to be sold at the three *Bibles*, being the first Shop in *Popes-Head* Alley, next to *Cornhil*, 1674.

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TO

All Young Persons throughout the Nation, especially those (of both Sexes) who begin to turn their faces towards

ZION.

Dear Hearts,

A Word spoken in due season, how good is it! it is often like Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver; many times such a word is sweet, pretious, pleasing and delectable, and strong in its operation.

A company of near friends Dining together one Sabbath day, one that was at Table (to prevent impertinent discourse) said that it was a question whether they should all go to Heaven or no, which struck them all into a dump, and caused every one to enter into a serious

Prov. 15. 23. 25. 10, 11.

A word spoken (*gnalo-hna*) upon his wheels that is, with a due concurrence, and observation of all circumstances of time, place, person, all which are as the wheels upon which our words and speeches should run: such a word is like Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver.

consideration with themselves, one thought if any of this company go to Hell it must be I, and so thought another, and another, & indeed, so thought almost every one then present, as well servants that waited, as those that sate at the table, as it was afterward acknowledg'd, and (through the mercy and blessing of God) this speech so wrought upon the spirits of most of them, that it proved the first instrumental means of their conversion.

I have my hopes through grace, that this Treatise though it be sown in weakness, yet by the blessing of the most High upon it, it may rise in power, and be an instrumental means of the winning of souls to Christ, which is my highest ambition in this world, and therefore I have broke thorow all difficulties, and carnal reasonings, that might otherwise have stifled this Babe in the Womb, & kept it from ever seeing of the light.

I have read of an Emperor, that delighted in no undertakings so much, as those which in the esteem of his Counsellours and Captains were deemed most difficult and impossible, if they said such or such an enterprize would never be

accom-

accomplished, it was Argument enough to him, to make the adventure, and he usually prospered, he seldom miscarryed.

I have never found greater and choicer blessings to attend any of my poor weak labours, than those that have been brought forth into the world through the greatest straits and difficulties.

Valerius Maximus reports, that one telling a Souldier, going to War against the Persians, that they would hide the Sun with their Arrows, he answered, we shall fight best in the shade; nothing should discourage nor dishearten a Souldier of Christ, 2 Tim. 2. 3, 4. Christ saith to all his Souldiers (as the black Prince his Father said to him fighting as it were in blood to the knees, and in great distress) either vanquish or dye. Men of no resolution, or of weak resolution, will be but little serviceable to the good of souls; such watchmen as will be free from the blood of souls, and be serviceable to the interest of Christ in turning sinners from darkness to light, must be men of spirit and resolution.

Valerius Maximus lib. 3. c. de Fiducia.

Hist. of France, p. 196.

I remember St. Austin beginneth one of his Sermons thus (Ad vos mihi

August de tempore Serm. 256

Sermo, O juvenes, flos ætatis, periculum mentis) *To you is my speech, O young men, the flower of age, the danger of the mind.*

So say I, to you O young men do I dedicate the ensuing Treatise, & that first because the matter contained therein doth primarily & eminently concern you.

And secondly, because of an earnest desire that I have of your internal and eternal well-fare.

And thirdly because there is most hope of doing good among you (as I evidence more at large in the following Treatise.)

And fourthly, To countermine the great underminer of your souls, whose great design is to poyson you and to possess you in the morning of your days.

Fifthly to provoke others that are more able & worthy, to be more serviceable to you in declaring themselves fully on this very subject; which none yet have done that I know of, though it be a point of as great concernment to young persons (especially) as any I know in all the Scriptures.

Sixthly, and lastly, because there are very many that do lie in wait to deceive,

cor

corrupt and poyson your persons, with God-dishonoring, Christ-denying, Conscience-wasting, and Soul-damning opinions, principles, and blasphemies.

I have read of one who boasted and gloried in this, that he had spent thirty years in corrupting and poysoning of youth; doubtless many wretches, many Monsters, there be amongst us, who make it their business, their glory, their ill to delude and draw young persons to those dangerous errors, and blasphemies that lead to destruction. Error and folly (saith one very well) be the knots of Satan, wherewith he ties Children to the stake to be burnt in Hell.

There is a truth in what the Tragedian said long since (Venenum in auro bibitur) poyson is commonly drunk out of a cup of gold. So is an error or hy-notion soonest taken into the Judgment & conscience from persons of the fairest carriage, and smoothest conversations. Error is so foul an Hag, that if it should come in its own shape, a man would loath it, and fly from it, as from Hell.

If Jezebel had not painted her face, she had not gotten so many young dot-

Eph. 4. 14. A blind eye is worse than a lame foot, he that had the Leprosie in his head, was to be pronounced utterly unclean

ing Adulterers to have followed her to their own ruine.

Ah! Young men, young men, the blessing of the Lord upon your serious and diligent perusal of this Treatise may be a happy means to preserve you from being ensnared and deluded by
Mat.23.15. those Monsters, who compass Sea and Land to make Proselytes for Hell.

And thus I have given you the reasons of my dedicating this Treatise to the service of your souls; I would willingly presume, that it will be as kindly taken, as it is cordially tendered; I hope none of you into whose hands it may fall, will say as once Antipater K. of Macedonia did, when one presented him with a Book treating of happiness, his answer was (Ou Scholazo) I have no leisure.

Ah! Young men and women, young men and virgins, as you tender the everlasting welfare of your souls, as you would escape Hell and come to Heaven, as you would have an interest in Christ, a pardon in your bosoms, as you would be blessed here, and glorious hereafter, find time, find leisure to read over and over the following Treatise which is purposely

posely calculated for your eternal good. But before I go further, I think it needful in some respects, to give the world some further account of other reasons or motives, that have prevailed with me to appear once more in Print, which are these:

First, having preaching a Sermon occasionally upon those words (on which this following discourse is built) I was earnestly importuned to Print the Sermon by some worthy friends; I did as long as in modesty I could, withstand their desires, judging it not worthy of them: but being at last overcome, and setting about the work, the breathings and comings in of God were such, as hath occasioned that one Sermon, to multiply into many. Luther tells us, that when he first began to turn his back upon Popery, he intended no more, but to withstand Popish Pardons, and selling Indulgencies; yet neither would God or his enemies let him alone, till he resolved with Moses, not to leave a hoof of Popery unopposed &c. God many times in the things of the Gospel carries forth his servants beyond their intentions, beyond their resolution. But Se-

Secondly, the kind acceptance and good quarter that my other pieces have found in the world, and those signal multiplyed blessings that have followed them, to the winning of many over to Christ, and to the building up of others in Christ, hath encouraged me to present this Treatise to the world, hoping that the Lord hath a blessing in store for this also.

Thirdly, that I might in some measure make up others neglects, whose Age, whose Parts, whose Experiences, whose Graces have long called upon them to do something considerable in this way, and that they may be provoked by my weak essay to do better, and to make up what is wanting through my invincible infirmities, and spiritual wants & weaknesses, which are so many, as may well make a sufficient Apology for all the defects and weaknesses that in this Treatise shall appear to a serious judicious eye. But,

2 Cor. 5. 14
2 Cor. 12. 15

Fourthly, The love of Christ and souls hath constrained me to it; as there is an attractive, so there is a compulsive virtue in Divine love. Love to

Christ

Christ and souls, will make a man willing to spend and be spent; he that prays himself to death, that preaches himself to death, that studies himself to death, that sweats himself to death, for the honour of Christ, and good of souls, shall be no loser in the end. Divine love is like a Rod of Myrtle, which, as Pliny *reports, makes the Traveller that carries it in his hand, that he shall never be faint nor weary: Divine Love is very operative, (si non operatur, non est) if it do not work, it is an argument, it is not at all. Divine Love, like fire, it is not idle, but active, he that loves cannot be barren; Love will make the soul constant, & abundant in well-doing. God admits none to Heaven (saith* Justin Martyr) *but such as can perswade him by their works, that they love him. The very Heathen hath observed that God doth not love his children with a weak womanish affection, but with a strong masculine love; and certainly, they that love the Lord strongly, that love him with a masculine love, they cannot but lay out their little all for him, and his glory. But,* Fifthly

Solus amor nescit difficultates, Love knows no difficulties.

Seneca.

Fifthly, I observe that Satan and his instruments are exceeding busie & unwearied in their designs, attempts, and endeavours, in these days, to corrupt, and poison, to defile and destroy, the young, the tender, the most hopeful, and most flourishing plants among us.

Latimer told the Clergy in his time, that if they would not learn diligence, and vigilance of the Prophets and Apostles, they should learn it of the Devil, who goes up and down his Diocess, and acts by an untired power, seeking whom he may destroy; when the Wolves are abroad, the shepherd should not sleep, but watch, yea, double his watch, remembring that he were better have all the blood of all the men in the world upon him, than the blood of one soul upon him, by his negligence, or otherwise.

Satan is a Lyon, not a Lamb, a roaring Lyon, not a sleepy Lyon, not a Lyon standing still, but a Lyon going up and down, as not being contented with the prey, the many millions of souls he hath got, he seeks whom he may sip up at a draught, as that word (καταπιειν) in the 1 Pet. 5. 8. imports, his greatest design

It is said of Marcellus the Roman General, that he could not be quiet, *Nec Victor nec victus*, neither Conquered, nor Conquerour, such a one is Satan.

design is to fill Hell with souls, which should awaken every one to be active, and to do all that may be done to prevent his design, and help forward the salvation of souls.

St. Chrysostom *compares good Pastors to Fountains that ever send forth waters, or Conduits that are always running, though no Pail be put under. But,* Chryſ. in Mat. Ho. 15.

Sixthly and lastly, I know the whole life of man is but an hour to work in, and the more work any man doth for Christ on earth, the better pay he shall have when he comes to Heaven. Every man shall at the last reap as he sows. Opportunities of doing service for Christ & souls are more worth than a world; therefore I was willing to take hold on this, not knowing how soon I may put off this earthly tabernacle, and remembring that as there is no believing, nor repenting in the Grave, so there is no praying, preaching, writing, nor printing in the Grave; we had need to be up and doing, to put both hands to it, & to do all we do with all our might, knowing, that the night draws on upon us where 1 Cor. 15. ult. 2 Cor. 9. 6. 2 Pet. 1. 13, 14. Eccl. 9. 10. Joh 9. 4

wherein no man can work.

A Christians dying day, is the Lords pay-day, that is a time to receive wages, not to do work: And thus I have given the world a true account of the Reasons that moved me to Print the following discourse.

There are many things in this Treatise that are of use to all, and several things of moment, that are not every day preached nor read. I have made it as pleasureable as time would permit, that so it might be the more profitable to the Reader, & that I might the better take the young man by a holy craft, which is a high point of Heavenly wisdom, there being no wisdom to that of winning of souls. I shall now follow this poor piece with my weak prayer, that it may be so blest from Heaven, as that it may bring in some, and build up others, and do good to all; And so rest,

1 Cor. 12. & 15. 2. Pro. 11. 30.

Your Friend and Servant in the Gospel of Christ,

THOMAS BROOKS.

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selves

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THE

THE Young-mans Duty AND EXCELLENCY.

1 *Kings* 14. ch. 13 v.

And all Israel *shall mourn for him, and bury him: for he only of* Jeroboam *shall come to the Grave, because in him there is found some good thing towards the Lord God of* Israel, *in the house of* Jeroboam.

I Shall only stand upon the latter part of this Verse, because that affords me matter most suitable to my design.

——*Because in him there is found some good thing towards the*

Lord God of Israel, *in the house of* Jeroboam.

These words are a commendation of *Abijah's* life; *In him was found some good thing towards the Lord, &c.* When *Abijah* was a Child, *verse* 3. 12. when he was in his young and tender years, he had the seeds of grace in him, he had the Image of God upon him, he could discern between good and evil and he did that which pleased the Lord.

The Hebrew word (*Naghar*) translated Child, *verse* 3. is very often applyed to such as we call Youths, or young men, *Exod.* 24. 5. *Numb.* 6. 11. 1 *Sam.* 2 17. *&c.*

Of such age and prudence was *Abijah*, as that he could chuse good and refuse evil, he was a *Lot* in *Sodom*, he was good among the bad; the bent and frame of his heart was towards that which was good, when the heart both of his Father and Mother was set upon evil.

נער is used for a young man or shipping, Gen 22. 5. and often for a servant, though he be a man of ripe years, Est. 2. 2. Such as one Evangelist calleth young men, Luke 12 45. another calleth fellow-servants, Mat. 4. 49.

Abijah began to be good betimes, he crost that pestilent Proverb, a young Saint, and an old Devil. 'Tis the Glory and Goodness of God, that he will take notice of the least good that is in any of his. 1 *Pet.* 3. 6. There was but one good word in *Sarah*'s speech to *Abraham*, and that was this, she called him *Lord*, and this, God mentions for her honour and commendation, *she called him Lord*: God looks more upon one grain of wheat, than upon a heap of Chaff; upon one shining Pearl, than upon an heap of rubbish. God finds a Pearl in *Abijah*, and he puts it into his Crown, to his eternal commendation. *There was found in him some good thing towards the Lord* &c. For the words,

There was found in him. The Hebrew word *Matsa*, sometimes signifies, finding without seeking, *Isa.* 65. 1. *I am found of them that sought me not*: so *Psal.* 116. *verse* 3. *The sorrows of Death compassed me*,

and the pains of Hell got hold upon me, I found trouble and sorrow. I found trouble which I look'd not for, I was not searching after sorrow, but I found it. There's an elegancy in the Original. The pains of Hell gat hold upon me; So we read, but the Hebrew is, The pains of Hell found me (one word signifies both) they found me, I did not find them. *There was found in* Abijah *some good thing towards the Lord, i. e.* there was found in him without searching or seeking, some good thing towards the Lord; it was plain and visible enough, men might see and observe it without enquiring, or seeking, they might run and read some good thing in him towards the Lord.

Secondly, The word sometime signifies, finding by seeking, or inquiry, *Isa.* 55. 6. *Seek ye the Lord, while he may be found,* &c. So upon search and inquiry, there was found in *Abijah* (though young) some good thing towards the Lord.

Thirdly

Thirdly, sometimes the Word notes the obtaining of that which is sufficient, *Josh.* 7. 16. *Numb.* 11. 22. *Judg.* 21. 14. in *Abijah* there was that good in him towards the Lord, that was sufficient to evidence the work of grace upon him, sufficient to satisfie himself and others, of the goodness and happiness of his condition, though he dyed in the prime, and flower of his days, &c.

And in him was found some good thing; The Hebrew word (*Tob*) that is here rendred good, signifies,

First, That which is right and just, 2 *Sam.* 15. 3. See thy matters are good and right, *i. e.* just and right.

Secondly, That which is profitable, *Deut.* 6. 11. *Houses full of all good things*, *i. e.* houses full of all profitable things.

Thirdly, That which is pleasing, 2 *Sam.* 19. 27. *Do what is good in thine eyes*, *i. e.* do what is pleasing in thine eyes.

Fourthly, that which is full, and compleat, *Gen.* 15. 15. *Thou shalt be buried in a good old age*, *i. e.* thou shalt be buried when thine age is full and compleat.

Fifthly, That which is joyful and delightful, 1 *Sam.* 25. 8. *We come in a good day*, *i. e.* we come in a joyful and delightful day: now put all together, and you may see that there was found in *Abijah*, when he was young, that which was right and just, that which was pleasing and profitable, and that which was matter of joy and delight.

In the words you have two things that are most considerable.

First, That this Young mans goodness was towards the Lord God of *Israel*; many there are that are good, nay, very good towards men, who yet are bad, yea, very bad towards God. Some there are, who are very kind to the creature, and yet very unkind to their Creator, many mens goodness

This age affords many such hypocrites such Monsters, &c.

nesse towards the creature, is like the rising Sun; but their goodnesse towards the Lord, is like a morning Cloud, or as the early dew, which is soon dryed up by the Sun-beams, but *Abijah's* goodnesse was towards the Lord, his goodnesse faced the Lord, it looked towards the glory of God. Two things make a good Christian, good actions, and good aime, and though a good aim doth not make a bad action good, (as in *Uzzah*) yet a bad aim makes a good action bad, (as in *Jehu*) whose justice was approved, but his policy punished; the first Chapter of *Hosea*, and the fourth Verse; doubtlesse *Abijah's* actions were good, and his aims good; and this was indeed his glory, that his goodnesse was towards the Lord. Hos. 6. 4.

There may be *Malum opus in bonâ materiâ*, as in *Jehu's* Zeal.

It's recorded of the *Catanenses*, that they made a stately Monument of Kingly Magnificence, in remembrance of two Sons, who took their aged Parents upon

their backs, and carryed them through the fire, when their Fathers house was all in a flame; these Young men were good towards their Parents; but what is this to *Abijah's goodness towards the Lord?* &c. A man cannot be good towards the Lord, but he will be good towards others; but a man may be good towards others, that is not good towards the Lord: Oh that mens practices did not give too loud a Testimony every day to this assertion! *&c.*

Happy are those fishes that with the Sturgeon or Crab-fish can swim against the stream of custom & example and hat with *Atticus*, can cleave to the right, though losing side.

Secondly, He was good among the bad. *He was good in the house of* Jeroboam; 'Tis in fashion to seem (at least) to be good among the good, but to be really good among those that are bad, that are eminently bad, argues not only a truth of goodness, but a great degree of goodness; this young man was good, *in the house of* Jeroboam, *who made all* Israel *to sin*, who was naught, who was very naught, who was stark naught; and yet

Abijah

Abijah, as the Fishes which live in the salt-sea are fresh; so though he lived in a (sink) sea of wickedness, yet he retained his *Goodness towards the Lord.*

They say, Roses grow the sweeter, when they are planted by Garlick: they are sweet and rare Christians indeed, who hold their goodness, and grow in goodness, where wickedness sits on the Throne; and such a one the young man in the Text was.

To be Wheat among Tares, Corn among Chaff, Pearls among Cockles, and Roses among Thorns is excellent.

To be a *Jonathan* in *Saul's* Court, *to be an Obadiah* in *Ahab's* Court, to be an *Obedmelech* in *Zedekiah's* Court, and to be an *Abijah* in *Jeroboam's* Court, is a wonder, a miracle.

To be a *Lot* in *Sodom*, to be an *Abraham* in *Chaldea*, to be a *Daniel* in *Babylon*, to be a *Nehemiah* in *Damasco*, and to be a *Job* in the Land of *Uz*, is to be a Saint among

among Devils, and such a one the man in the Text was.

The Poets affirm, that *Venus* never appeared so beauteous, as when she sate by black *Vulcan's* side. Gracious souls shine most clear, when they be set by black conditioned persons; *Stephen's* face never shin'd so Angelically, so gloriously (in the Church) where all were vertuous, as before the Council, where all were vicious and malicious. So *Abijah* was a bright Star, a shining Sun in *Jeroboam's* Court, which for prophaneness and wickedness, was a very Hell.

The words which I have chosen to insist upon, afford us several Observations, but I shall only name one, which I intend to prosecute at this time, and that is this, *viz.*

CHAP. I.

Doct. *That it is a very desirable and commendable thing, for young men to be really good betimes.*

Other

OTher Scriptures speak out this to be a truth, besides what you have in the Text to confirm it, as that of the second of *Chronicles*, Chapter 34. 1,2,3. Verses. *Josiah* was eight years old when he began to Reign, and he reigned in *Jerusalem* one and thirty years, and he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the ways of *David* his Father, and declined neither to the right hand nor to the left; For in the eighth year of his Reign, while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of *David* his Father: And in the twelfth year, he began to purge *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, from the High-places, and the Groves and the Carved Images, and the molten Images 'Twas *Obadiah's* honour, that he feared the Lord from his youth: And *Timothy's* Crown, that he knew the Scriptures from a Child; and St. *John's* Joy, that he found children walking in the truth;

Job 32. 4, 5,6,7.

1 King. 18. 12.

2 Tim. 3. 15.

2 Epist. vers. 4.

truth, this revived his good old heart, and made it dance for joy in his bosom; to spend further time in the proving of this truth, would be but to light Candles, to see the Sun at noon.

The Grounds and reasons of this point, *viz.*

That it is a very desirable and commendable thing, for young men to be really good betimes; are these that follow.

Deut.6.5. ch.11.13. *Augustine* beginneth one of his Sermons thus (*Ad vos mihi Sermo, O Juvenes, flos ætatis periculum mentis.* Aug. de temp. Ser. 156. To you is my speech, O young men! the flower of age, the danger of the mind)

Reason I.

First, Because the Lord Commands it; and Divine Commands are not to be disputed, but obeyed. In the 12. Chapter of *Ecclesiastes*, and the 1. Verse, *Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them*: Remember now, I say, now: now is an atome, will puzzle the wisdom of a Philosopher, the skill of an Angel to divide: Now is a Monosyllable in all learned Languages.

Remem-

Remember now thy Creator: Remember him presently, instantly, for thou dost not know what a day, what an hour may bring forth; thou canst not tell what deadly sin, what deadly temptation, what deadly judgment, may overtake thee; if thou dost not now, even now *Remember thy Creator.*

Remember now thy Creator: Remember to know him, remember to love him, remember to desire him, remember to delight in him, remember to depend upon him, remember to get an Interest in him, remember to live to him, and remember to walk with him. *Remember now thy Creator*; the Hebrew is *Creators*, Father, Son, and Spirit. To the making of man, a Council was called in Heaven, in the first of *Genesis*, and 29. verse, *Remember thy Creators*, Remember the Father, so as to know him, so as to be inwardly acquainted with him. Remember the Son, so as to believe in him, so as to rest upon him, so

so as to embrace him, and so as to make a compleat resignation of thy self to him. Remember the Spirit, so as to hear his voice, so as to obey his voice, so as to feel his presence, and so as to experience his influence, &c.

Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth; he doth not say in the time of thy youth, but *in the days of thy youth*; to note that our life is but as a few days; it is but a vapour, a span, a flower, a shadow, a dream: and therefore *Seneca* saith well, *that though death be before the old mans face, yet he may be as near the young mans back*, &c.

Aug. l. 1. Confess.

Mans life is the shadow of smoak the dream of a shadow, one doubteth whether to call it a dying life, or a living death.

Ah! Young men, God commands you to be good betimes. Remember, Young men, that it is a dangerous thing to neglect one of his Commands, who by another is able to command you into

into nothing, or into Hell. To act or run cross to Gods express Command (though under pretence of Revelation from God) is as much as a mans life is worth, as you may see in that sad story, 1 *King.* 13. *verse* 24. *&c.*

Let young men put all their carnal Reasons, though never so many and weighty, into one Scale, and Gods absolute Command into the other, and then write *Tekel* upon all their reasons; they are weighed in the Balance, and found too light.

Ah Sirs! What God commands must be put in speedy execution, without denying, or delaying, or disputing the difficulties that attend it. Most Young Men in these days, do as the Heathens, when their Gods called for a Man, they offered a Candle; or as *Hercules* offered up a painted man instead of a living. When God calls upon Young men to serve him with the Primrose of their youth, they usually put him off till

Obedientia non discutit Dei mandata, sed facit. Prosper.

till they are overtaken with trembling joynts, dazled eyes, fainting hearts, failing hands, and feeble knees, but there will be bitterness in the end, &c.

Reason II.

Young men must be really good betimes.

Because they have means and opportunities of being good betimes.

Never had men better means, and greater opportunities of being good, of doing good, and of receiving good, than now. Ah Lord! how knowing, how believing, how Holy, how Heavenly, how Humble might young men be, were they not wanting to their own souls? Young men might be good, very good, yea, eminently good, would they but improve the means of Grace, the tenders of Mercy, and the knockings of Christ by his Word, Works, and Spirit.

Erasmus. The Antients painted Opportunity with a hairy forehead, but bald behind, to signifie, that while a man hath Opportunity before him

him, he may lay hold on it, but if he suffer it to slip away, he cannot pull it back again.

How many young men are now in everlasting Chains, who would give ten thousand worlds, (had they so many in their hands to give) to enjoy but an opportunity to hear one Sermon more, to make one Prayer more, to keep one Sabbath more, but cannot? This is the Hell, their Torment, this is the Scorpion that is still biting, this is the Worm that is always gnawing. Woe, woe to us, that we have neglected, and trifled away those golden opportunities, that once we had to get our sins pardoned, our natures changed, our hearts bettered, our Consciences purged, and our souls saved, &c. * I have read of a King, who having no Issue to succeed him, espying one day a well-favoured youth, took him to Court, and committed him to Tutors, to instruct him, providing by his Will, that if he proved

* *Bellarm. in concione de cruciatibus Gehennæ.*

ed fit for Government, he should be crowned King; if not, he should be bound in Chains, and made a Gally-Slave. Now when he grew to years, the Kings Executors perceiving that he had sadly neglected those means and opportunities, whereby he might have been fit for State-Government, called him before them, and declared the Kings Will and pleasure concerning him, which was accordingly performed; for they caused him to be fettered, and committed to the Gallies. Now what tongue can express how much he was affected and afflicted with his sad and miserable estate, especially when he considered with himself, that now he is chained, who might have walked at liberty; Now he is a Slave, who might have been a King; Now he is over-ruled by Turks, who might once have ruled over Christians? The Application is easie.

Ah

Ah! young men, young men, shall Satan take all opportunities to tempt you? shall the World take all opportunities to allure you? shall wicked men take all opportunities to insnare you, and to undo you? and shall Christian friends take all opportunities to better you? and shall Gods faithful Messengers take all opportunities to save you? and will you, *will you neglect so great salvation?* *Plutarch* writes of *Hannibal*, that when he could have taken *Rome*, he would not; and when he would have taken *Rome*, he could not. Many in their youthful days, when they might have Mercy, Christ, Pardon, Heaven, they will not; and in old age, when they would have Christ, Pardon, Peace, Heaven, they cannot, they may not. God seems to say, as *Theseus* said once; Go, says he, and tell *Creon*, *Theseus* offers thee a gracious offer; yet I am pleased to be friends, if thou will submit (this is my first mes-

'Tis storied of *Charles*, King of *Sicily*, and *Jerusalem*, that he was called *Carolus Cunctor*, *Charles* the lingerer; this age affords many such lingerers, &c.

message) but if this offer prevail not look for me to be up in Arms.

Reason III.

Because when they have fewer and lesser sins to answer, and repent of, multitudes of sins and sorrows are prevented by being good betimes.

Why young-men should be really good betimes. Lord, saith *Austin*, I have loved thee late, the greater was his sin, and the more were his sorrows.

The more we number our days the fewer sins we shall have to number. As a Copy is then best from blotting, when dust is off upon it; so are we from sinning when (in the time of our youth) we remember that we are but dust. The tears of young penitents do more scorch the Devils, than the flames of Hell, for here all their hopes are blasted, and the great undermining counter-mined, and blown up. *Mane* the Devils Verb, he bids tarry time enough to repent; but *Mane* is Gods Adverb, and he bids Repent early, in the morning of thy youth, for then thy sins will be fewer

fewer, and leſſer. Well, Young men, remember this, He that will not at the firſt hand buy good Counſel cheap, ſhall at the ſecond hand buy repentance over dear.

Ah! Young men, Young men, if you do not begin to be good betimes, thoſe ſins that are now as Jewels ſparkling in your eyes, will at laſt be Milſtones about your necks, to ſink you for ever.

Pſal. 25. 7. Job 13. 26. There is nothing puts a more ſerious frame into a mans ſpirit, than to know the worth of his time.

——Among many things that *Beza* in his laſt will and Teſtament, gave God thanks for, this was the firſt and chief, that he at the age of ſixteen years, had called him to the knowledge of the truth, and ſo prevented many ſins and ſorrows, that otherwiſe would have overtaken him, and have made his life leſs happy, and more miſerable. Young Saints often prove old Angels, but old ſinners ſeldom prove good Saints, *&c.*

Reaſon IV.

Why Young men ſhould be really good betimes.

Becauſe time is a precious Talent that

that young men must be countable for.

The sooner they begin to be good, the more easie will be their accounts, especially as to that great Talent of time. *Cato* and other Heathens held that account must be given, not only of our labour, but also of our leisure; at the great day it will appear, that they that have spent their time in mourning have done better than they that have spent their time in dancing; and they that have spent many days in humiliation, than they that have spent many days in idle recreations.

I have read of a devout man, who when he heard a Clock strike, he would say, here is one hour more past that I have to answer for. Ah! young men, as time is very precious, so it is very short; time is very swift, it is suddenly gone, in the ninth of *Job*, and the 25th. *Verse*. *My days are swifter than a Post, they fly away, they see no good.* The Hebrew word (*Kalal*) translated *swifter*

than

than a poſt, ſignifies any thing that is light, becauſe light things are quick in motion.

The Ancients emblemed Time with wings, as it were not running but flying, Time is like the Sun, that never ſtands ſtill, but is ſtill a running his race; the Sun did once ſtand ſtill, yea, went back, but ſo did never time. Time is ſtill running and flying; it is a bubble, a ſhadow, a dream; can you ſeriouſly conſider of this, young men, and not *begin to be good betimes?* Surely you cannot. Sirs, if the whole earth whereupon we tread were turned into a lump of Gold, it were not able to purchaſe one minute of time! Oh the regretting of the damned, for miſ-ſpending pretious time! Oh what would they not give to be free, and to enjoy the means of grace one hour! Ah with what attention! with what intention! with what trembling and melting of heart! with what hungring and thirſting would they hear the

Sophocles Phocylides.

Who is there among us that knows how to value time, and prize a day at a due rate? *Sen.* Epiſt

World! Time (saith *Bernard*) were a good commodity in hell, and the traffick of it most gainful, where for one day a man would give ten thousand worlds if he had them; Young men, can you in good earnest believe this, and not begin to be good betimes?

A Heathen said, He lived no day without a line, that is, he did something remarkable every day.

Ah! Young men and Women, as you love your pretious immortal Souls, as you would escape Hell, and come to Heaven, as you would be happy in Life, and blessed in Death, and glorious after Death; don't spend any more of your pretious time, in drinking and drabbing, in carding, dicing, and dancing; don't trifle away your time; don't sweare away your time; don't whore away your time; do not lye away your time, but begin to be good betimes, because time is a Talent, that God will reckon with you for: Ah! Young men and women, you may reckon upon years, many years yet to come, when possibly you have no

not so many hours to make ready your accompts, it may be this night you may have a summons, and then if your time be done, and your work be to begin, in what a sad case will you be; will you not wish that you had never been born?

Seneca was wont to jear the *Jews* for their ill husbandry, in that they lost one day in seven; meaning their Sabbath; O! that it were not too true of the most of Professors, both young and old, that they lose not only one day in seven, but several days in seven.

Sirs! Time let slip cannot be recalled, the foolish Virgins found it so, and *Saul* found it so, and *Herod* found it so, and *Nero* found it so, the *Israelites* found it so, yea, and *Jacob*, and *Josiah*, and *David*, (though good men) yet they found it so to their cost. Mat. 25. 5. 1 Sam. 13. 13. Heb. 3. 17, 18, 19.

The *Egyptians* draw the Picture of Time with three Heads, the first of a greedy Wolf, gaping for time past; because it hath

ravenously devoured the memory of so many things past recalling. The

Second of a crowned Lion roaring for time present, because it hath the principality of all actions, for which it calls loud. The

Third of a deceitful Dog fawning for time to come, because it feeds some men with many flattering hopes, to their eternal undoing: Ah! young men and women, as you would give up your accounts at last with joy, concerning this talent of time, with which God hath trusted you, *begin to be good betimes*, &c.

Why Young persons should be really good betimes. *Seneca*, (though a Heathen) could say, believe me true joy is no ligh: thing

Reason V.

Because they will have the greater comfort and joy when they come to be old.

The 71. *Psalm* 5, 17, 18. compared. *Thou art my hope, O Lord God, Thou art my trust, from my youth. O God thou hast taught me from*

from my youth, and hitherto I have declared thy wondrous works. Now alſo when I am old and gray-headed, O God forſake me not, untill I have ſhewed thy ſtrength unto this Generation, and thy power unto every one that is to come.

Polycarpus could ſay, when old, Thus many years have I ſerved my Maſter Chriſt, and hitherto hath he dealt well with me. If early Converts live to be old, no joy to heir joy, their joy will be the greateſt joy, a joy like to the joy of Harveſt, a joy like to their joy that divide the ſpoil, their joy will be the ſoundeſt joy, the weightieſt joy, the holieſt joy, the pureſt joy, the ſtrongeſt joy, and the moſt laſting joy; the Carnal joy of the Wicked, the gliſtring (golden) joy of the Worldling, and the fl.ſhing joy of the Hypocrite, is but as the crackling of thorns under a pot, to the joy and comfort of ſuch, who when old, can ſay with good *Obadiah*, *that they feared the Lord* Iſa 9. 3.

from their youth. If when you are young, your eyes shall be full of tears (for sin) when you are old your heart will be full of joys. Such shall have the best Wine at last.

Oh! *That Young men would begin to be good betimes,* that so they may have the greater Harvest of Joy, when they come to be old, &c. 'tis sad to be sowing your seed, when you should be reaping your Harvest; 'tis best to gather in the Summer of youth, against the Winter of old age.

Why young men should be really good betimes.

Reason VI.

Because an eternity of felicity, and glory hangs upon those few moments that are allotted to them.

Luk. 10. 25. It was a good question the young man proposed, *What shall I do to inherit eternal life?* I know I shall be eternally happy, or eternally miserable, eternally blest, or eternally curst, eternally saved, or eternally damned, &c.

O what shall I do to inherit eternal life? my cares, my fears, my troubles are all about eternity, no time can reach eternity, no age can extend to eternity, no tongue can express eternity. Eternity is that (*unum perpetuum hodie*) one perpetual day, which shall never have end; what shall I do, what shall I not do, that I may be happy to all eternity?

I am now young, and in the flower of my days; but who knows what a day may bring forth? he greatest weight hangs upon the smallest wires, an eternity depends upon those few hours I am to breathe in the world; O! what cause have I therefore to be good betimes, to know God betimes, to believe betimes, to repent betimes, to get my peace made, and my pardon sealed betimes, to get my nature changed, my conscience purged, and my interest in Christ cleared betimes, before eternity overtakes me, before my Glass be out,

Æternitas est semper & immutabis est. The old *Romans* were out that thought Eternity dwelt in Statues, and in Marble Monuments.

my Sun set, my Race run, lest the dark night of eternity should overtake me, and I made miserable for ever.

I have read of one (*Myrogenes*) who when great gifts were sent unto him, he sent them all back again, saying, I only desire this one thing at your Masters hand; to pray for me, that I may be saved for eternity. O that all young men and women, who make Earth their Heaven, Pleasure their Paradise, that eat of the fat, and drink the sweet, that cloath themselves richly, and crown their heads with Rose-buds, that they would seriously consider of eternity, so to hear as for eternity, and pray as for eternity, and live as for eternity, and provide as for eternity! that they may say with that famous Painter *Zeuxes* (*Æternitati pingo*) I paint for eternity, we do all for eternity, we believe for eternity, we repent for eternity, we obey for eternity, &c.

Luk. 15, 19, 20.

Oh that you would not make those

those things eternal for punishment, that cannot be eternal for use.

Cur ea quæ ad usum diuturna esse non possunt, ad supplicium diuturnum deposcet? Ambrose in Luk. 4. T. 5.

Ah! Young men and women, Christ calls, and the blood of Jesus Christ calls, and the Spirit of Christ in the Gospel calls, and the rage of Satan calls, and your sad state and condition calls, and the happiness and blessedness of glorified Saints calls; these all call aloud upon you to make sure a glorious Eternity, before you sail out into the dreadful Ocean. All your eternal good depends upon the short and uncertain moments of your lives; and if the thread of your lives should be cut before a happy eternity is made sure, wo to you that ever you were born; Do not say, O Young man, that thou art young, and hereafter will be time enough to provide for Eternity; for Eternity may be at the door ready to carry thee away for ever. Every days experience speaks out Eternity to be as near the young mans back,

as 'tis before the old mans face.

O grasp to day the Diadem of a blessed eternity, lest thou art cut off before the morning comes! though there is but one way to come into this world, yet there is a thousand thousand ways to be sent out of this world; Well Young men and women, remember this, as the motions of the soul are quick, so are the motions of Divine Justice quick also; and if you will not hear the voice of God to day, if you will not povide for eternity to day, God may swear to morrow that you shall never enter into his rest; it is a very sad and dangerous thing to trifle and dally with God, his Word, his Offers, our own souls and eternity: Therefore let all young people labour to be good betimes, and not to let him, that is goodness it self, alone, till he hath made them good, till he hath given them those hopes of Eternity, that will both make them good, and keep them

Heb. 3. 7, 8, 15, 16, 18, 19.

good,

good, that will make them happy, and keep them happy, and that for ever; if all this will not do, then know that e're long those fears of eternity, of misery, that beget that monster, Despair, which like *Medusa*'s Head, astonisheth with its very aspect, and strangles hope, which is the breath of the soul, will certainly overtake you; as it is said, *Dum Spiro, Spero*; so it may be inverted, *Dum Spero, Spiro*; other miseries may wound the spirit, but Despair kills it dead; my prayers shall be that none of you may ever experience this sad truth, but that you may all be good in good earnest betimes, which will yield you two Heavens, a Heaven on Earth, and a Heaven after Death.

Reason VII.

Why Young persons should be really good betimes.

Because they do not begin to live, till they begin to be really good.

Till they begin to be good, they are

are dead God-wards, and Christ-wards, and Heaven-wards, and Holiness-wards; till a man begins to be really good, he is really dead, *Philippians* 2. 1. and that,

Respectu operis. First in respect of working, his works are called dead works, *Heb.* 9. 14. the most glistering services of unregenerate persons, are but dead works, because they proceed not from a principle of Life, and they lead to death, *Rom.* 6. 21. and leave a sentence of death upon the soul, till it be washed off by the blood of the Lamb.

Respectu honoris. Secondly, He is dead in respect of honour, he is dead to all priviledges, he is not fit to inherit mercy; who will set the Crown of Life upon a Dead man? The Crown of life is only for living Christians, *Revelations* 2. 10. The young Prodigal was dead till he begun to be good, till he begun to remember his Father's house, and to resolve to return home, *My Son was dead, but is a-*

Luk. 15. 24. *live;*

live; and the Widow that liveth in pleasure, is dead while she liveth. 1 Tim. 5. 6. As it is a reproach to an old man to be in Coats, so 'tis a disgrace to be an old babe, *i.e.* to be but a babe in grace, when old in years. Heb. 5. 12, 13, 14.

When *Josaphat* asked *Barlaam*, how old he was? he answered, five and forty years old; to whom *Josaphat* replyed, thou seemest to be seventy; true saith he, if you reckon ever since I was born; but I count not those years which were spent in vanity.

Ah Sirs! you never begin to live, till you begin to be good in good earnest. There is the life of Vegetation, and that is the life of Plants; Secondly, there is the life of Sense, and that is the life of Beasts; Thirdly, there is the life of Reason, and that is the life of man; Fourthly, there is the life of Grace, and that is the life of Saints; and this life you do not begin to live till you begin to be good. If a living Dog is better than a dead Lyon, as the Wise-man speaks, and if a Flie is more excellent than the Heavens, because the Flie Eccl. 9. 4.

hath

hath life, which the Heavens have not, as the Philosopher saith; what a sad, a dead, poor nothing is that person that is a stranger to the life of grace and goodness, that is dead even whilst he is alive?

Mæcenas in *Seneca* had rather live in many diseases, than dye. And *Homer* reporteth of his *Achilles*, that he had rather be a servant to a poor Country Clown here, than to be a King to all the souls departed.

Most men will bleed, sweat, vomit, purge, part with an estate, yea, with a limb, yea limbs, yea, and many a better thing, (*viz.* the honour of God, and a good Conscience) to preserve their Natural lives: as he crys out: Give me any deformity, any torment, any misery, so you spare my life; and yet how few, how very few are to be found, who make it their work, their business, to attain to a life of goodness, or to begin to be good betimes, or to be dead to the world, and alive to God, rather than to be dead to God, and alive to the world? this is for a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation, that natural life is so highly prized, and spiritual life so little regarded, &c.

Rea-

Reason VIII.

Because the Promise of finding God, of enjoying God, is made over to an early seeking of God.

Why Young men should be really good betimes.

Prov. 8. 17. *I love them that love me, and they that seek me early, shall find me.* Or as the Hebrew hath it, they that seek me in the morning, shall find me. By the benefit of the morning light we come to find the things we seek. *Shahhar* signifies to seek inquisitively, to seek diligently, to seek timely in the morning. As the *Israelites* went early in the Morning, to seek for Manna. And as Students rise early in the Morning, and sit close to it, to get knowledg; so saith wisdom, *They that seek me in the spring and morning of their youth, shall find me.*

שחר Ex. 16. 21.

Scipio went first to the Capitol & then to the Senate.

Tully an Heathen frequently called God *Optimum maximum*, the best and greatest. God is *omnia super omnia.*

Now to seek the Lord early, is to seek the Lord firstly. God hath in himself all the good of Angels, of men, and Universal Nature; he hath all glories, all dignities, all riches, all treasures, all

all pleasures, all comforts, all delights, all joys, all beatitudes. God is that one infinite perfection in himself, which is eminently, and virtually all perfections of the creatures, and therefore he is firstly to be sought. Abstracts do better express him, than Concretes and Adjectives; he is Being, Bounty, Power, Wisdom, Justice, Mercy, goodness, and love it self, and therefore worthy to be sought before all other things. Seek ye first the good things of the mind, saith *Philosophy*; and doth not *Divinity* say as much?

Cicero.

Days of grace have their dates, therefore tak heed of saying, *Cras, cras*, to morrow, to morrow.

Again, to seek early, is to seek opportunely, to seek while the opportunity does present, *Judg. 9. 33. Thou shalt rise early, and set upon the City*; that is, thou shalt opportunely set upon the City.

Such there have been, who by giving a glass of Water opportunely, have obtained a Kingdom, as you may see in the story of *Thamastus*, and King *Agrippa*.

Ah!

Ah! Young Men and Women, you do not know, but that by an early, by an opportune seeking of God, you may obtain a Kingdom that shakes not, and Glory that passeth not away. Heb. 12. 28

There is a season wherein God may be found, *Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near*; and if you slip this season, you may seek him, and miss him. *Though they cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them, when they make many prayers, I will not hear. Then shall they cry unto the Lord, but he will not hear. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer, they shall seek me early, but shall not find me.* This was *Saul's* misery; *The Philistins are upon me, and God will not answer me*; 'tis justice that they should seek, and not find at last, who might have found, had they but sought seasonably and opportunely, &c. Isa. 55. 6. Jer. 11. 11. Isa. 1. 15. Mic. 3. 4. Prov. 1. 28

Again

Again, to seek early, is to seek earnestly, affectionately. *With my soul have I desired thee in the night, yea, with my spirit within me, will I seek thee early:* The Hebrew word signifies both an earnest, and an early seeking; in the morning the spirits are up, and men are earnest, lively, and affectionate.

Isa. 26. 9.

Ah! such a seeking shall certainly be crowned with finding: *My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord in the morning will I direct* (Hebrew, martial) *my prayer unto thee, and will look up,* (Hebrew, look out like a watch-man) *Let all those that put their trust in thee rejoyce, let them ever shout for joy; because thou defendest them,* (Hebrew, thou coverest over, or protectest them.) *Let them also that love thy Name, be joyful in thee: for thou Lord wilt bless the Righteous, with favour wilt thou compass him* (Hebrew, crown him) *as with a shield.* None have ever thus sought the Lord, but they have, or certainly shall find

Psal. 5. 3, 11, 12.

find him. *Seek and ye shall find*, Mat. 7.7. *Your hearts shall live that seek God*, Psalm 69. 32. *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much*; James 5. 16. or as the Greek hath it, *The working prayer of a righteous man availeth much*; that prayer that sets the whole man to work, will work wonders in Heaven, in the heart, and in the earth. Earnest prayer, like *Sauls* Sword, and *Jonathans* Bow, never returns empty.

ἐνεργουμένη. It signifies such a working as notes the liveliest activity that can be.

One speaking of *Luther*, who was a man very earnest in prayer, said, (*hic homo potuit apud Deum quod voluit*) this man could have what he would of God, &c.

Again, to seek early, is to seek chiefly, primarily, after this or that thing; what we first seek, we seek as chief. Now to seek the Lord early, is to seek him primarily, chiefly, in the 63. *Psalm*, and 1. *verse*, *Thou art my God, early will I seek thee*, that is, I will seek thee, as my choicest, and my

Omne bonum in summo bono.

my chiefest good. God is *Alpha* the Fountain from whence all grace springs, and *Omega*, the Sea to which all glory runs, and therefore early and primarily to be sought. God is a perfect good, a solid good (*id bonum perfectum dicitur cui nil accedere, solidum cui nil decedere potest. Lactantius*) that is a perfect good, to which nothing can be added; that a solid, from which nothing can be spared; such a good God is, and therefore early and chiefly to be sought. God is a pure and simple good, he is a light in whom there is no darkness, a good in whom there is no evil. The goodness of the Creature is mixt, yea, that little goodness that is in the Creature, is mix'd with much evil, but God is an immix'd good, he is good, he is a pure good, he is all over good, he is nothing but good. God is an All-sufficient good, *walk before me, and be upright, I am God All-sufficient*, in the 17. of *Genesis* and 1. Verse. *Habet omnia quæ habet*

1 Joh. 1. 5.

Quicquid in Deo, est ipse Deus.

habet habentem omnia. Aug. He hath all, that hath the haver of all. God hath in himself all power to defend you, all wisdom to direct you, all mercy to pardon you, all grace to enrich you, all righteousness to cloath you, all goodness to supply you, and all happiness to Crown you. God is a satisfying good, a good that fills the heart, and quiets the soul: in the 33. of *Genesis*, and the 11. *vers. I have enough*, saith good *Jacob*, *I have all*, saith *Jacob*, for so the Hebrew hath it (*Cholli*) I have all, I have all comforts, all delights, all contents, *&c.* In having nothing, I have all things, because I have Christ, having therefore all things in him, I seek no other reward, for *he is the universal reward*, saith one. As the worth and value of many pieces of Silver is to be found in one piece of Gold: So all the petty excellencies that are scattered abroad in the Creatures, are to be found in God, yea, all the whole Volume of Perfections, which Cant. 2. 2.

which is ſpread through Heave
and Earth, is Epitomized in hi
No good, below him that is t
greateſt good, can ſatisfie the ſoul
a good wife, a good child, a goo
name, a good eſtate, a good friend
cannot ſatisfie the ſoul; theſe m
pleaſe, but they cannot ſatisfie. A
abundance, if it be not my Go
is to me nothing but poverty, an
want, ſaid one.

Omnis copia quæ non eſt Deus meus, mihi egeſtas eſt. Aug. Soliloq. c. 13.

Ah! that young men and w
men would but in the morning o
their youth, ſeek, yea ſeek earl
ſeek earneſtly, ſeek affectionatel
ſeek diligently, ſeek primarily
and ſeek unweariedly this God
who is the greateſt good, the be
good, the moſt deſirable good; wh
is a ſuitable good, a pure good,
ſatisfying good, a total good, an
an eternal good.

Why Young perſons ſhould be really good betimes.

Reaſon IX.

Becauſe the time of youth is th choiceſt and fitteſt time for ſervice.

No

Now your parts are lively, senses fresh, memory strong, and nature vigorous, the days of your youth, are the spring and morning of your time, they are the first-born of your strength, therefore God requires your non-age, as well as your dotage, the Wine of your times, as well as the Lees, as you may see typified to you in the first fruits which were dedicated to the Lord, and the first-born. The time of youth, is the time of salvation, it is the acceptable time, it is thy summer, thy Harvest time. O young man! therefore do not sleep, but up and be doing, awaken thy heart, rouze up thy soul, and improve all thou hast, put out thy reason, thy strength, thy all, to the treasuring up of heavenly Graces, precious Promises, divine experiences, and spiritual comforts against the Winter of old age; and then old age, will not be to thee an evil age, but as it was to *Abraham*, *a good old age*; do not put off God with fair

The days of youth are called, *ætas bona*, in *Cicero*: and *ætas optima* in *Seneca*.

Exo. 13. 2

ch. 22. 9.

Gen. 25. 28.

fair promiſes and large pretences till your laſt ſands are running, and the days of dotage have overtaken you. That is a ſad word of the Prophet, *Curſed be the Deceiver which hath in his Flock a Male, and yet offereth to the Lord a corrupt thing.*

Mal. 1. 14.

Ah! Young men and women who are like the Almond-tree, you have many Males in the Flock your ſtrength is a Male in the flock, your time is a Male in the flock, your reaſon is a Male in the flock, your parts are a Male in the flock, and your gifts are a Male in the flock; now if he be curſt that hath but one Male in his flock, and ſhall offer to God a corrupt thing, a thing of no worth, of no value how will you be curſt, and curſt curſt at home, and curſt abroad curſt temporally, curſt ſpiritually and curſt eternally, who have many Males in your flock, and yet deal ſo unworthily, ſo fraudulently, and falſe-heartedly with God as to put him off with the dregs of

Jer. 1. 11. The Almond-tree bloſſoms in *January* (while it is yet winter) and the fruit is ripe in *March*.

you

your time and ſtrength while you ſpend the Primroſe of your youth in the ſervice of the World, the Fleſh and the Devil.

The Fig-tree in the Goſpel, that did not bring forth fruit timely and ſeaſonably, was curſt to admiration; the time of youth is the time and ſeaſon for bringing forth the fruits of Righteouſneſs and Holineſs, and if theſe fruits be not brought forth in their ſeaſon, you may juſtly fear, that the curſes of Heaven will ſecretly, and inſenſibly ſoak, and ſink into your ſouls, and then wo, wo to you, that ever you were born; the beſt way to prevent this Hell of Hells, is to give God the Cream and flower of your youth, your Strength, your Time, your Talents; Veſſels that are betime ſeaſoned with the ſavour of life, never loſe it, *Prov.* 22. 6. Mat. 21. 22.

Why Young perſons ſhould be really good (in good earneſt) betimes.

Reaſon X.

Becauſe death may ſuddenly and unex-

expectedly seize upon you, you have no lease of your lives.

Youth is as fickle as old age, the young man may find Graves enough of his length in burial places, as green Wood, and old Logs meet in one fire, so young sinners and old sinners meet (in one Hell) and burn together; when the young man is in his spring and prime, then he is cut off, and dies, one dieth in his full strength (or in the strength of his perfection, as the Hebrew hath it) being wholly at ease and quiet; His breasts are full of milk, and his bones are moistened with marrow. *David's* children died when young, so did *Job's* and *Jeroboam's*, &c. Every days experience tells us, that the young mans life is as much a vapour, as the old mans is.

Pares nascuntur, pares moriuntur, in the womb, and in the tomb, they are all alike. Job 21.23, 24. 'Tis an allegorical description of the highest prosperity.

I have read of an *Italian* Poet who brings in a proper Young man, rich and potent, discoursing with Death in the habit of a Mower, with his Sythe in his hand

hand, cutting down the life of man (*For all Flesh is Grass*, Isa. 40. 6.) and wilt thou not spare any mans person, saith the young man? I spare none, saith Death; mans life is but a day, a short day, a winters day, oft times the Sun goes down upon a man, before it be well up; your day is short, your work is great, your journey long, and therefore you should rise early, and set forward towards Heaven betimes, as that man doth that hath a long journey to go in a winters day.

Deaths motto is, *Nulli cedo*, I yield to none.

The life of man is absolutely short. *Behold thou hast made my days as an hands-breadth.* Psal. 39. 5. The life of man is comparatively short, and that if you compare mans life now to what he might have reacht, had he continued in Innocency. Sin brought in Death, Death is a fall, that came in by a fall; or if you compare mans life now, to what they did reach to before the Flood, then several lived six, seven, eight, nine hun- Gen. 5.

dred years; or if you compare mens dayes with the dayes of God, *Mine age is as nothing before thee*; or if you compare the dayes of man, to the dayes of Eternity.

Psal. 39.5.

Ah! Young men, young men, can you seriously consider of the brevity of mans life, and trifle away your time, the offers of grace, your pretious Souls, and Eternity, &c.? Surely you cannot, surely you dare not; if you do but in good earnest ponder upon the shortness of mans life. It is recorded of *Philip* King of *Macedon*, that he gave a pension to one, to come to him every day at dinner, and to cry to him (*Memento te esse mortalem*) remember thou art but mortal.

The Heathen could say, that the whole life of man should be nothing else but (*Meditatio mortis*) a meditation of death.

Ah! Young men and Old had need be often put in mind of their mortality, they are too apt to forget that day, yea, to put far from them the thoughts of that day. I have read of three that could not endure to hear that bitter word

Death,

Death, mentioned in their ears, and surely this age is full of such monsters.

And as the life of man is very short, so it is very uncertain, now well, now sick, alive this hour, and dead the next. Death doth not always give warning before-hand, sometimes he gives the mortal blow suddenly, he comes behind with his dart, and strikes a man at the heart, before he saith, *Have I found thee, O mine Enemy?* *Eutychus* fell down dead suddenly, *Act. 20. 9.* Death suddenly arrested *David*'s Sons, and *Job*'s Sons; *Augustus* dyed in a Compliment; *Galba*, with a Sentence; *Vespasian*, with a Jest; *Zeuxes* dyed laughing at the Picture of an old Woman, which he drew with his own hand; *Sophocles* was choaked with the stone in a Grape; *Diodorus* the Logician dyed for shame, that he could not answer a jocular question propounded at the table by *Stilpo*; *Joannes Measius*, preaching upon the raising of the woman

Petrarch telleth of one who being invited to dinner the next day, answered, *Ego à multis annis, crastinum non habui.* I have not had a morrow for this many years.

of *Naims* Son from the dead, within three hours after dyed himself.

Ah! Young men and Women, have you not cause, great cause to be good betimes, for Death is sudden in his approaches, nothing more sure than Death, and nothing more uncertain than Life! therefore know the Lord betimes, turn from your sins betimes, lay hold on the Lord, and make peace with him betimes, that you may never say, as *Cæsar Borgias* said, when he was sick to death, When I lived (said he) I provided for every thing but Death, now I must die, and am unprovided to die, &c.

Reason XI.

Why Young men should be really good betimes.

Because it is ten to one, nay an hundred to one if ever they are converted, if they are not converted when they are young.

God

God usually begins with such betimes, that he hath had thoughts of love and mercy towards from everlasting: The instances cited to prove the Doctrine, confirm this Argument; and if you look abroad in the World, you shall hardly find one Saint among a thousand, but dates his conversion from the time of his Youth. 'Twas the young ones that got through the Wilderness into *Canaan*. If the Tree do not bud, and blossom, and bring forth fruit in the Spring, it is commonly dead all the year after; if in the spring and morning of your days, you do not bring forth fruit to God, it is an hundred to one, that ever you bring forth fruit to him, when the evil days of old age shall overtake you, wherein you shall say, you have no pleasure. For as the Son of *Syrach* observes, if thou hast gathered nothing in thy youth, what canst thou find in thy age? 'Tis rare, very rare that God sows and reaps in old age,

Hos. 11. 1. When *Israel* was a child, then I loved him, &c.

Numb 26. 64. An Hebrew Doctor observes, that of those six hundred thousand that went out of *Egypt*, there were but two persons that entred *Canaan*. Eccl. 25. 5.

age, usually God sows the seed of grace in youth, that yields the harvest of joy in age.

Though true Repentance be never too late, yet late Repentance is seldom true. Millions are now in Hell, who have pleased themselves with the thoughs of after-Repentance. The Lord hath made a promise to late Repentance, but where hath he made a Promise of late Repentance? Yea what can be more just and equal, that such should seek, and not find, who might have found, but would not seek, and that he should shut his ears against their late prayers, who have stopt their ears against his early Calls? The Ancient Warriours would not accept an old man into their Army, as being unfit for service; and dost thou think that God will accept of thy dry bones, when Satan hath sucke out all the marrow? what Lord, what Master, will take such into their service, who have all their dayes served their ene-

Prov. 1. 24, 32.

enemies? and will God, will God? The *Circaſſians* (a kind of Mongril Chriſtians) are ſaid to divide their life between ſin and devotion, dedicating their Youth to rapine, and their old age to repentance; if this be thy caſe, I would not be in thy caſe for ten thouſand worlds. *Brerew. Enqui.*

I have read of a certain great man, that was admoniſhed in his ſickneſs to repent; who anſwered, that he would not repent yet, for if he ſhould recover, his companions would laugh at him; but growing ſicker and ſicker, his friends preſſed him again to repent, but then he told them, that it was too late (*Qui jam judicatus ſum, & condemnatus*) for now, ſaid he, I am judged and condemned. *Beda* hath this ſtory.

Reaſon XII.

Becauſe elſe they will never attain to the honour of being Old Diſciples. Why Young perſons ſhould be really good betimes.

CHAP. II.

It is a very great honour to be an old Disciple.

NOw this honour none reach to, but such as are converted betimes, but such as turn to the Lord in the spring and morning of their youth: It is no honour for an old man to be in coats, nor for an old man to be a babe in grace. An A, B, C. old man, is a sad and shameful sight: O but it is a mighty honour to be a man when he is old, that he can date his conversion from the morning of his youth. Now that it is an honour to be an old Disciple, I shall prove by an induction of Particulars. As,

What more ridiculous than (*puer centum annorum*) a child of an hundred years old?

Particular I.

All men will honour an old Disciple, Prov. 16.31. *The hoary head is a Crown of Glory, if it be found in the way of Righteousness.* God requires that the aged should be honoured,

A Crown is a very glorious thing, but there are but few of them.

noured, *Levit.* 19. 32. *Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man* (the old man here, is expounded by some, the wise man) *and fear thy God, I am the Lord.* Hoarinesse is only honourable, when found in a way of righteousnesse; a white head accompanyed with a holy heart, makes a man truly honourable. There are two glorious sights in the World, the one is, a young man walking in his uprightnesse; and the other is an old man walking in ways of righteousnesse; 'Twas *Abraham*'s honour that he went to his grave in a good old age; or rather, as the Hebrew hath it, with a good gray head; many there be that go to their graves with a gray head; but this was *Abraham*'s Crown, that he went to his grave with a good gray head; had *Abraham*'s head been never so gray, if it had not been good; it would have been no honour to him; a hoary head, when coupled with an unsanctified heart, is rather a curse than a blessing. Gen. 25. 8.

blessing, when the head is white as Snow, and the Soul as black as Hell; God usually gives up such to the greatest scorn and contempt. Princes are hanged up by their hands, the faces of Elders were not honoured, and this God had threatned long before. *The Lord shall bring against thee a Nation from far, a Nation of fierce Countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young.*

Isa. 65. 20.

Lam. 5. 12.

Deut. 28. 49, 50.

I have read of *Cleanthes*, who was wont sometimes to chide himself, *Ariston* wondring thereat asked him, whom chidest thou? *Cleanthes* laughed and answered, I chide an old Fellow (*qui canos quidem habet, sed mentem non habet*) who hath gray hairs indeed, but wants understanding and prudence worthy of them. The Application I will leave to the gray heads, and gray beards of our time, who have little else to commend them to the world, but their hoary heads, and snowy beards.

Pu-

Particular II.

God usuaally reveals himself most to Old Disciples, to Old Saints, Job 12. 12. *With the Antient is Wisdom, and in length of days Understanding.* God usually manifests most of himself, to aged Saints, they usually pray most, and pay most; they labour most, and long most after the choicest manifestations of himself, and of his grace; and therefore he opens his bosom most to them, and makes them of his Cabinet Council, *Gen.* 18. 17, 19. *And the Lord said, shall I hide from* Abraham *that thing which I do, for I know him, that he will command his Children, and his Household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment, that the Lord may bring upon* Abraham, *that which he hath spoken of him.* *Abraham* was an old friend, and therefore God makes him both of his Court and Council; we usually open our hearts most freely, fully, and familiarly, to

בישישים in the antient is wisdom. *Valentinius* the Emperor's Motto, was (*animum veterrimus optimus*) an old friend is best.

to old friends: So doth God to his ancient friends. Ah! what a bleſſed ſight and enjoyment of Chriſt had old *Simeon*, that made his very heart to dance in him! *Now Lord letteſt thou thy Servant depart in peace according to thy Word, for mine eyes have ſeen thy Salvation*, &c. I have ſeen him, who is my light, my life, my love, my joy, my crown, my Heaven, my all; therefore now let *thy Servant depart in peace*. So *Anna*, when ſhe was fourſcore and four years old, was ſo filled with the diſcoveries and enjoyments of Chriſt, that ſhe could not but declare what ſhe had taſted, felt, ſeen, heard, and received from the Lord: She was ripe, and ready to diſcover the fulneſs, ſweetneſs, goodneſs, excellency, and glory of that Chriſt, whom ſhe had long loved, feared, and ſerved. So *Paul* lived in the light, ſight, and ſweet injoyments of Chriſt, when aged, in years, in grace. So, when had *John* that glorious viſion of Chriſt among the

Luk. 2. 25, 26, 27, 28.

Verſ. 36, 37, 38.

Phil. 4. 5, 7, 9.

Rev. 1. 7. to *ult.*

the golden Candlesticks, and those discoveries and manifestations of the ruine of *Rome*, the fall of Antichrist, the casting the beast, and false Prophet into a Lake of Fire, the conquest of the Kingdoms of the World, by Christs Bow and Sword, the binding up of Satan, and the New *Jerusalem* coming down from God out of Heaven, but when he was old, when he was aged, in Years and in Grace? The Lord speaks many a secret in the ears of aged Saints, of old Christians, which young Christians are not acquainted with, as that Phrase imports, 2 *Sam.*7.27. *Thou O Lord God of Hosts hast revealed to thy Servant*, so you read it in your books, but in the Hebrew it is, Lord, thou hast revealed this to the ear of thy Servant. Some wonder how that word to the ear came to be left out in your books, in which indeed the Emphasis lies; we will tell many things in an old friends ear, which we will not acquaint young ones with. So doth God many times

גליתה
את אזן
Galitha e-
thozen.

times whisper an old Disciple in the ear, and acquaints him with such things, that he hides from those that are of younger years. And by this you may see what an honour it is to be an Old Disciple.

Particular III.

An Old Disciple, an Old Christian he hath got the art of serving God, the Art of Religion, got the Art of hearing, the Art of praying, the Art of meditating, the Art of repenting, the Art of believing, the Art of denying his natural self, his sinful self, his religious self.

All Trades have their mystery and difficulty; so hath the Trade of Christianity, young Christians usually bungle in Religious works, but old Christians acquit themselves, like work-men that need not be ashamed. A young Carpenter gives more blows, and makes more chips, but an old Artist doth the most, and best work; a yong Christian may make most noise in religious Duties, but an

Heb. 5 11, 12, 13, 14 Yet as *Solomon* was not ashamed to say, that in his old age he was a learner, so those that are the greatest Artists in Christianity, will confess, that they are still but learners.

an old Christian makes the best work. A young Musician may play more quick and nimble upon an instrument, than an old, but an old Musician hath more skill and judgment than a young: the Application is easie; and by this you may also see, what an honour it is to be an old Christian.

Particular IV.

An Old Disciple, an old Christian, is rich in spiritual experiences. O the experiences that he hath of the ways of God, of the Workings of God, of the Word of God, of the Love of God! O the divine stories that old Christians can tell of the power of the word, of the sweetness of the Word, of the usefulness of the Word! as a light to lead the soul, as a staff to support the soul, as a spirit to quicken the soul, as an anchor to stay the soul, and as a cordial to comfort and strengthen the soul! O the stories that he can tell you concerning the love of Christ, the blood of Christ, the Offices

1 Joh. 2. 1. Psal. 119. 49, 50. Old men love to speak of antient things.

Offices of Christ, the Merits of Christ, the righteousness of Christ, the graces of Christ, and the influence of Christ. O the stories that an Old Disciple can tell you of the in-dwellings of the Spirit, of the operations of the Spirit, of the teachings of the Spirit, of the leadings of the Spirit, of the sealings of the Spirit, of the witnessings of the Spirit, and of the comforts and joys of the Spirit! O the stories that an old Christian can tell you of the evil of sin, the bitterness of Sin, the deceitfulness of Sin, the prevalency of Sin, and the happiness of the conquest over Sin! O the stories that he can tell you, of the snares of Satan, the devices of Satan, the temptations of Satan, the rage of Satan, the malice of Satan, the watchfulness of Satan, and the ways of triumphing over Satan! As an old Souldier can tell you, of many battels, many scars, many wounds, many losses, and many Victories, even to admiration: So an old Saint is able to tell you many

many divine stories, even to admiration.

Pliny writes of the Crocodile, that she grows to her last day: So aged Saints, they grow rich in spiritual experience to the last. An Old Christian being once asked, if he grew in goodness, answered, yea, doubtless I do, for God hath said, *The Righteous shall flourish like the Palm-tree* (now the Palm-tree never loseth his leaf, or fruit, saith *Pliny*) *he shall grow like a Cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the Court of our God; They shall still bring forth fruit in old age, they shall be fat and flourishing.* Hos. 14. 5, 6, 7. Ps. 29. 12, 13, 14.

A fellow to this Promise *Isaiah* mentions, *Hearken unto me, O house of* Jacob, *and all the remnant of the house of* Israel, *which are born by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb, and even to your old age; I am he, and even to hoary hairs will I carry you; I have made, and I will bear, even I will carry, and will deliver you.* Isa. 46. 3, 4.

There

There is nothing more commendable in fulness of age, than fulness of knowledge and experience; nor nothing more honourable than to see Antient Christians very much acquainted with the Antient of days.

Dan. 7. 9, 13, 22.

It is a brave sight to see Ancient Christians like the Almond-tree. Now the Almond-tree doth flourish and is full of blossoms in the Winter of old age; for as *Pliny* tells us the Almond-tree doth blossom in the month of *January*. Experiments in Religion are beyond notions and expressions; a sanctified heart is better than a silver tongue; no man so rich, so honourable, so happy, as the old Disciple, that is rich in Spiritual experiences; and yet there is no Christian so rich in his experiences, but he would be richer.

The Lawyer.

As *Julianus* said, that when he had one foot in the grave, he would have the other in the School: so though an Old Disciple hath one foot in the grave,

et he will have the other in Christs School, that he may still be treasuring up more and more Divine Experiments; and by this also you see, *What an honour it is to be an Old Disciple*, &c.

Particular V.

An Old Disciple is very stout, couragious, firm, and fixt in his resolution.

An old Christian is like a Pillar, a Rock, nothing can move him, nothing can shake him; what is suckt in youth, will abide in old age; Old Souldiers are stout and couragious, nothing can daunt nor discourage them. When *Joshua* was an hundred and ten years old, O how couragious and resolute was he! *And if it seem evil unto you, to serve the Lord, chuse you this day whom you will serve, whether the Gods that your Fathers served, that were on the other side of the Flood, or the Gods of the* Amonites, *in whose Land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the*

Psal. 44. 9. *ult.*

Josh. 24. 15, 29.

the Lord. *And it came to pass, after these things, that* Joshua *the Son of* Nun, *the Servant of the Lord dyed, being an hundred and ten years old.*

Considius, a Senator of *Rome*, told *Cæsar* boldly, that the Senators durst not come to council, for fear of his Souldiers; he replyed, why then dost thou go to the Senate? he answered, because my age takes away my fear.

Ah! none so couragious, none so divinely fearless, none so careless in evil days, as ancient Christians. An old Christian knows that that good will do him no good, which is not made good by perseverance; his resolution is like that of *Gonsalvo*, who protested to his Souldiers, shewing them *Naples*, that he had rather dye one foot forwards, than to have his life secured for long, by one foot of retreat. Shall such a man as I am flee, said undaunted *Nehemiah*? he will couragiously venture life and limb, rather than by one foot of retreat,

Neh. 6. 11.

treat, discredit his profession with the reproach of fearfulness. It was a brave magnanimous speech of *Luther*, when dangers from opposers did threaten him, and his associates; Come (saith he) let us sing the forty sixth *Psalm*, and then let them do their worst.

When *Polycarpus* was fourscore and six years old, he suffered Martyrdom couragiously, resolutely, and undauntedly.

When one of the Ancient Martyrs was very much threatned by his Persecutors, he replyed, there is nothing of things visible, nothing of things invisible, that I fear, I will stand to my profession of the Name of Christ, and contend earnestly for the Faith once delivered to the Saints, come on it what will.

Old Disciples, Old Souldiers of Christ, they have the heart and courage of *Shammah*, one of *David's* Worthies, who stood and defended the field, when all the rest fled. The Hebrews call a young man *Nagnar*,

Aristotle (though a Heathen) could say, that in some cases a man had better lose his life, than be cowardly, *Arist. Ethic.* 3. *c.* 1

2 Sam. 23. 11, 12.

Nagnar, which springs from a r
that signifies to shake off, or to
Mat. 19. 20, 21, 22. tossed to and fro, to note h
fickle, and how constant in inc
stancy young men are, they u
ly are persons either of no resolu
for good, or of weak resolutio
they are too often won with a N
and lost with an Apple; but no
aged Christians, in all Earthqua
they stand fast, like Mount *Sion*, t
cannot be removed. And by this
you may see, *What an honour it i*
be an old Disciple, and old Christi

Particular VI.

Rom. 6. 6. Gal. 5. 24. ch. 6. 14. *An Old Disciple, an old Christian prepared for death, he hath been long dying to sin, to the world, to friends, to self, to relations, to all, and no man is prepared to die, as he that thus daily dies.*

An Old Disciple hath lived sincerely to Christ, he hath lived eminently to Christ, he hath lived in all conditions, and under all changes to Christ, he hath lived exemplarily to Christ, he hath li

Rom. 14 7. 8. Phil. 2. 21, 22, 23.

ed long to Christ, and therefore the more prepared to dye, and be with Christ. An old Disciple hath a Crown in his eye, a pardon in his bosom, and a Christ in his arms; and therefore may sweetly sing it out with old *Simeon*, *Lord, now let thy Servant depart in peace.* As *Hillary* said to his Soul; Soul, thou hast served Christ this seventy years, and art thou afraid of Death? Go out Soul, go out.

Many a day said old *Cowper*, have I sought death with tears, not out of impatience, distrust or perturbation, but because I am weary of sin, and fearful to fall into it. *Nazianzen* calls upon the King of terrours, devour me, devour me. And *Augustine*, when old, could say, shall I die ever? yes, or shall I dye at all? yes, why then Lord, if ever, why not now? why not now? So when *Modestus* the Emperours Lieutenant threatned to kill *Basil*, he answered, if that be all, I fear not; yea, your Master cannot more pleasure me, than

Zeno a wise Heathen, said I have no fear but of old age.

Cyprian could receive the cruellest sentence of death with a *Deo gratias*, God thanke thee.

in sending me unto my Heavenly Father, to whom I now live, and to whom I desire to hasten.

It was the saying of an Antient Minister a little before his death, I cannot say, I have so lived, that I should now be afraid to die, but this I can say, I have so learned Christ, that I am not afraid to die.

Isa. 57.1,2. Old Christians have made no more to die, than to Dine. It is nothing to die, when the Comforter stands by. Old Disciples know that to die, is but to lie down in their beds, they know that

Eccl 7.1. their dying day is better than their birth day; and this made *Salomon* to prefer his Coffin before his Crown, the day of his dissolution before the day of his Coronation.

The Antients were wont to call the days of their death, *Natalia*, not dying days, but birth-days.

The Jews to this day, stick not to call their *Golgothaes*, *Bate Chaim*, the houses or places of the Living; Old Christians know

th

that death is but an entrance into life, 'tis but a Pass-over, a *Jubilee*, 'tis but the Lords Gentleman-usher to conduct them to Heaven, and this prepares them to die, and makes death more desireable than life, and by this you may see, *that it is an Honour to be an Old Disciple.*

Particular VII.

And Old Disciple, an Old Christian shall have a great reward in Heaven.

1 Cor. 15. *ult.* 2 Cor. 9. 6. Mat. 5. 10, 11, 12. God will reward his Servants *Secundum laborem*, according to their labour, though not *Secundum proventum*, according to the success of their labour.

Old Christians have done much and suffered much for Christ; and the more any man doth or suffers for Christ here, the more glory he shall have hereafter. 'Twas the saying of an Old Disciple upon his dying bed, He is come, He is come (meaning the Lord) with a great Reward, for a little Work. *Agrippa* having suffered imprisonment for wishing *Cajus* Emperour, the first thing *Cajus* did, when he came to the Empire, was to prefer *Agrippa* to a Kingdom,

he gave him also a chain of Gold, as heavy as the chain of Iron that was upon him in prison; And will not Christ richly reward all his suffering Saints? Surely he will: Christ will at last pay a Christian for every prayer he hath made, for every Sermon he hath heard, for every tear he hath shed, for every morsel he hath given, for every burthen he hath born, for every battle he hath fought, for every enemy he hath slain, and for every temptation that he hath overcome.

Cyrus in a great expedition against his enemies, the better to incourage his Souldiers to fight, in an Oration that he made at the head of his Army, promised upon the victory, to make every Foot-souldier a Horse-man, and every Horseman a Commander, and that no Officer that did valiantly, should be unrewarded; but what are *Cyrus* his rewards, to the rewards that Christ our General, promises to his? *Rev.* 3. 21. *To him that*

Mat. 19. 28. Luk. 22. 30. Mat. 5. 12.

overc-

overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his Throne. As there is no Lord to Christ, so there is no rewards to Christs, his rewards are the greatest rewards, he gives Kingdoms, Crowns, Thrones, he gives Grace and Glory, *Psalm* 48. 11.

As the King in *Plutarch* said of a groat, it is no Kingly gift, and of a Talent it is no base bribe

It is said of *Araunah*, that noble *Jebusite*, renowned for his bounty, that he had but a Subjects purse, yet a Kings heart; but Jesus Christ hath a Kings purse, as well as a Kings heart, and accordingly he gives.

And as Christs rewards are the greatest rewards, so his rewards are the surest rewards; he is faithful that hath promised, 1 *Thes.* 5. 24. *Antiochus* promised often, but seldom gave (upon which he was called in a way of derision, a great promiser) but Jesus Christ never made any promise, but he hath or will perform it, 2 *Cor.* 1. 20. nay, he is often better than his word,

1 *Cor.* 2. 9. He gives many times more than we ask. The man sick of the Palsie, asked but health, and Christ gave him health, and a pardon to boot. *Solomon* desired but wisdom, and the Lord gave him wisdom, and honour, and riches, and the favour of Creatures, as Paper and Pack-thread into the bargain. *Jacob* asked him but cloaths to wear, and bread to eat, and the Lord gave him these things, and riches, and other mercies into the bargain.

Mat. 9. 2.

2 Chro. 1. 10, to 16.

Gen. 28. 20. compared with Gen. 32. 10.

Christ doth not measure his gifts by our Petitions, but by his own Riches and Mercy. Gracious souls many times receive many gifts and favours from God, that they never dream't of, nor durst presume to beg, which others extreamly strive after, and go without.

Archelaus being much importuned by a covetous Courtier for a Cup of Gold wherein he drank, gave it unto *Euripides*, that stood by; saying, Thou art worthy to

ask

ask and be denyed, but *Euripides* is worthy of gifts, although he ask not.

The Prodigal craves no more but the place of a hired Servant, but he is entertained as a Son, he is clad with the best robe, and fed with the fatted Calf; he hath a Ring for his hand, and Shoos for his feet, rich supplies, more than he desired. *Jacobs* Sons in a time of Famine, desired only Corn, and they return with Corn and Money in their Sacks, and with good news too, *Joseph* is alive, and Governour of all *Ægypt*.

Luke 15. 19---25.

Gen 42.

And as his rewards are greater and surer than other rewards, so they are more durable and lasting than other rewards; the Kingdom that he gives, is a Kingdom that shakes not; the treasures that he gives, are treasures that corrupt not; and the glory that he gives, is glory that fadeth not away; but the rewards that men give, are like themselves, fickle and unconstant, they are withering and fading.

Heb. 12. 28. Matth. 6. 19, 20. 1 Pet. 1. 4

Xerxes Crowned his Steers-man in the morning, and beheaded him in the evening of the same day.

And *Andronicus* the Greek Emperour crowned his Admiral in the morning, and then took off his head in the afternoon.

Roffensis had a Cardinals Hat sent him, but his head was cut off before it came to him. Most may say of their Crowns, as that King said of his, O Crown! more noble than happy. It was a just complaint which long ago was made against the Heathen Gods, (*O faciles dare summa deos, eademque tueri Difficiles!*) they could give their favourites great gifts, but they could not maintain them in the possession of them; the world may give you great things, but the world cannot maintain you in the possession of them; but the great things, the great rewards that Christ gives his, he will for ever maintain them in the possession of them, otherwise Hea-

Heaven would not be Heaven, Glory would not be Glory; now by all these things you see, that it is a very great honour to be an Old Disciple, an Old Christian; and this honour you will never attain to, except you begin to be really good betimes, except in the morning of your Youth, you return to the Lord, and get an interest in him.

I shall now come to make some Use and Application of this weighty truth to our selves.

You see beloved, that it is the great Duty and Concernment of Young Men, *To be really good betimes*: If this be so; Then,

Use I.

First, This Truth looks sowerly and sadly upon such Young men, that are only seemingly good, that make some shews of goodness, but are not right to-

ward God at the Root.

2 Chro. 24. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 13, 14, 15, 16.

As *Joash* when he was young, he seemed to have good things in him towards the Lord, whilst good *Jehoiada* lived, but when *Jehoiada* was dead, *Joash* his goodness was buryed with him.

Nero's first five years are famous, but afterwards who more cruel?

Ah! how many in these dayes that have been seemingly good, have turned to be naught, very naught, yea, stark naught?

It is said of *Tiberius*, that whilst *Augustus* ruled he was no way tainted in his reputation, and that whilst *Drusus* and *Germanicus* were alive, he feigned those vertues which he had not, to maintain a good opinion of himself, in the hearts of the people; but after he had got himself out of the reach of contradiction and controlment, there was no fact in which he was not faulty, no crime to which he was not accessory.

There are some that write, that after *Demas* had forsaken *Paul*, he became a Priest in an Idol Temple.

Oh! That this were not applicable to many young persons in

these

these days, who have made great shew, and taken upon them a great name, who have begun to out-shine the Stars, but are now gone out like so many snuffs, to the dishonour of God, the reproach of the Gospel, the grief of others, and the hazard of their own souls.

It was a custom of old, when any were baptized, the Minister delivered a white Garment to be put on, saying, Take thou this white Vestment, and see thou bring it forth without spot, at the Judgment seat of Jesus Christ; whereupon one *Maritta* Baptizing one *Elpidophorus*, who when he was grown up, proved a prophane wretch, he brings forth the white garment, and holding it up, shakes it against him, saying: This Linen garment *Elpidophorus*, shall accuse thee at the coming of Christ, which I have kept by me as a witness of thy Apostasie.

Crabs that go backward, are reckoned among the unclean creatures. Lev. 11. 10.

Ah! Young men and women, your former professions will be a sad witness against you in the great

great day of our Lord Jesus, except you repent and return in good earnest to the Lord.

Prov. 14. 14

Oh it had been better that you had never made profession, that you had never set your faces towards Heaven, that you had never pretended to God and Christ, that you had never known the way of Righteousness, than after you have known it, to turn from the holy Commandment!

2 Pet. 1. 21.

Cyprian in his Sermon *de lapsis*, reporteth of divers, who forsaking the Faith, were given over to evil spirits, and dyed fearfully.

Oh the delusions, and the Christ-dethroning, Conscience-wasting, and Soul-undoing Opinions, and principles, that many young ones (who once were hopeful ones) are given up to! That dreadful Scripture seems to be made good in power upon them: *All you that forsake the Lord, shall come to be ashamed, and they that depart from him, shall be written upon the dust*; to begin well; and not to proceed, is but

Jer. 17. 13.

but to aspire to a higher pitch, that the fall may be the more desperate. Backsliding is a wounding sin. You read of no arms for the back, though you do for the breast: He that is but seemingly good, will prove at last exceeding bad, 2 *Tim.* 3. 13. *They wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.*

Hos. 4. 14. Eph. 6. 11, 18.

The wolf, though he often dissembles, and closely hides his nature, yet he will one time or other shew himself to be a Wolf.

In the days of *Hadrian* the Emperour, there was one *Bencosby* who gathering a multitude of *Jews* together, called himself *Ben cocuba*, the Son of a Star, applying that prophecy to himself, *Numb.* 23. 17. but his mask was taken off, his Hypocrisie discovered, and he found to be *barchosaba*, the Son of a Lye; this age hath afforded many such Monsters, but their folly is discovered, and their practices abhorred. This was the Young mans commendation in the Text, *That there was found in him some real good*

Comets make a greater blaze than fixed stars.

good towards the Lord.

Use II.

Secondly, This truth looks sowerly and sadly upon such young men, who are so far from having good things in them towards the Lord, that they give themselves up to those youthful lusts and vanities, that are dishonouring, provoking and displeasing to the Lord; who roar, and revel, and gad, and game, and dice and drink, and drab, and what not? these make work with a witness for Repentance, or Hell, or the Physician of souls.

I shall but touch upon the evil of youth, and then come to that which is mostly intended.

CHAP. III.

The first evil that most properly attends Youth is Pride.

1 Tim. 3. 6. Pride of heart, Pride of apparel, Pride of parts; young men are apt to

to be proud of health, ſtrength, friends, relations, wit, wealth, wiſdom: two things are very rare, the one is to ſee a Young man humble and watchful, and the other to ſee an Old man contented and chearful.

Bernard ſaith, that pride is the rich mans couzen, and experience every day ſpeaks out pride to be the Young mans couzen. God (ſaid one) had three Sons, *Lucifer*, *Adam*, and *Chriſt*, the firſt aſpired to be like God in Power, and was therefore thrown down from Heaven: The ſecond to be like him in knowledge, and was therefore deſervedly driven out of *Eden*, when young: the third did altogether imitate and follow him in his goodneſs, mercy and humility, and by ſo doing obtained an everlaſting inheritance.

Pride cannot climb ſo high, but juſtice will fit above.

Remember this young men, and as you would get a Paradiſe, and keep a Paradiſe, get humble, and keep humble. Pride is an evil that puts men upon all manner of e-

vil. *Accius* the Poet, though he were a Dwarf, yet would be pictured tall of ſtature.

Pſapbon, a proud *Lybian*, would needs be a God, and having caught ſome birds, he taught them to ſpeak and prattle, The great God *Pſapbon*.

Menecrates, a proud Phyſician wrote thus to King *Philip*, *Menecrates* a God, to *Philip* a King.

Proud *Simon* in *Lucian*, having got a little wealth, changed his name (from *Simon* to *Simonides*) for that there were ſo many Beggars of his Kin, and ſet the houſe on fire wherein he was born, becauſe no body ſhould point at it.

What ſad evils *Pharaoh's* pride, and *Haman's* pride, and *Herod's* pride, and *Belſhazzar's* pride put them upon, I ſhall not now mention.

Acco an old woman ſeeing her deformity in a glaſs, went mad, &c.

Ah Young men! Young men! had others a window to look into your breaſts, or did your hearts ſtand where your faces do, you would even be afraid of your ſelves,

ſelves, you would loath and abhor your ſelves.

Ah! Young men, young men, as you would have God to keep houſe with you, as you would have his mind and ſecrets made known to you, as you would have Chriſt to delight in you, and the Spirit to dwell in you, as you would be honoured among Saints, attended and guarded by Angels, get humble, and keep humble.

Tertullian's counſel to the young gallants of thoſe times was excellent; cloath your ſelves (ſaid he) with the ſilk of piety, with the ſattin of ſanctity, and with the purple of modeſty; So ſhall you have God himſelf to be your Suitor.

Tert. de Cult. fœm. cap. 13.

2. Evil.

The ſecond Evil that youth is ſubject to, is ſenſual pleaſures and delights. Rejoyce O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart chear thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the ſight of thine eyes.

Eccl. 11. 9. 2 Sam. 13. 22---29. ἡδονὴ δέλεαρ κακῶν. Pleaſure is the habit of ſin, ſaith *Plato.*

The wiſe man by an Ironical conceſſion,

ceſſion, bids him rejoyce, *&c.* fi
&c. Thou art wilful, & reſolved up
on taking thy pleaſure, go on, tak
thy courſe: this he ſpeaks by way o
mockage and bitter ſcoff, *&c.* bu
know thou, that for all theſe thing
God will bring thee into Judge
Jud. 14 10. ment. So *Samſon* made a feaſt; fo
ſo uſed the young men to do; th
hearts of young men uſually a
much given up to pleaſure. I hav
read of a young man, who was ve
ry much given up to pleaſures, h
ſtanding by St. *Ambroſe*, and ſe
ing his excellent death, turned t
other young men by him and ſai
Oh! that I might live with yo
and die with him. Senſual plea
ſures are like to thoſe Locuſts, Re
9 7. the crowns upon whoſe head
are ſaid to be only as it were ſuch
or ſuch in appearance, and lik
gold, but *ver.* 10. it is ſaid, the
were (not as it were, but) ſtings i
their tails.

They were much out that held pleaſure to be mans *ſummum bonum.*

Senſual pleaſures are but ſeem
ing and appearing pleaſures, bu
the pains that attend them ar
tru

ue and real; he that delights in ensual pleasures, shall find his greatest pleasures become his bitterest pains.

The Heathens looked upon the ack parts of pleasure, and saw it going away from them, and leaing a sting behind.

Pleasures pass away as soon as they have wearied out the body, nd leave it as a bunch of Grapes, whose juice hath been pressed out; which made one to say (*Nulla major voluptas quàm voluptatis fastidium*) I see no greater pleasure in this world, than the contempt of pleasure.

Julian, though an Apostate, yet professed, that the pleasures of the body were far below a great spirit. And *Tully* saith, he is not worthy of the name of a man (*qui unum diem velit esse in voluptate*) that would entirely spend one whole day in pleasures; it is better not to desire pleasures, than to enjoy them. I said of laughter, it is mad, and of mirth, what Eccl. 2. 2.

dost

doſt thou? the interrogation bi
a challenge to all the Maſters
mirth, produce any one ſatisf
ctory fruit which it affordeth,
they could.

Xerxes being weary of all ple
ſures, promiſed rewards to the i
ventors of new pleaſures, whi
being invented, he never the leſs r
mained unſatisfied. As a Bee flye
from flower to flower, and is n
ſatisfied, and as a ſick man r
moves from one bed to anothe
from one ſeat to another, fro
one Chamber to another for eaſ
and finds none: So men give
up to ſenſual pleaſures, go fro
one pleaſure to another, but c
find no content, no ſatisfaction
their pleaſures. *The eye is not ſatisfi*
Eccl. 1. 8. *with ſeeing, nor the ear filled wi*
hearing. There is a curſe of unſa
tisfiableneſs lies upon the Cre
ture; honours cannot ſatisfie th
ambitious man, nor riches the co
vetous man, nor pleaſures the vo
luptuous man; man cannot tak
off the wearineſs of one pleaſure,
by

y another, for after a few evapo-
ated minutes are spent in plea-
ures, the body presently fails the
mind, and the mind the desire,
and the desire the satisfaction, and
all the man.

Pleasures are *Junoes* in the pur-
suit, and but clouds in the enjoy-
ment; Pleasure is a beautiful Har-
lot, sitting in her Chariot, whose
four wheels are Pride, Gluttony,
Lust, and Idleness; the two Horses
are Prosperity and Abundance; the
two Drivers are, Idleness and Secu-
rity; her Attendants and Followers
are Guilt, Grief, late Repentance (if
any) and oft Death and Ruine;
many great men, and many strong
men, and many rich men, and ma-
ny hopeful men, and many young
men, have come to their ends by
her, but never any enjoyed full sa-
tisfaction and content in her.

Ah! Young men, Young
men, avoid this Harlot, and come
not near the door of her house.
And as for lawful pleasures, let me
only say this, 'tis your wisdom
only

Becanus saith, that the fruit of the tree of knowledge is sweet, but in the end it breeds *Choler*, so do worldly pleasures.

only to touch them, to taſte the and to uſe them, as *Mithrida* uſed poyſon; to fortifie your ſelv againſt caſual extremities, and m ladies: When Mr. *Roger Aſcha* asked the Lady *Jane Gray*, how could loſe ſuch paſtime, her Fat with the Dutcheſs being a Hu ing in the Park; ſmilingly anſwe ed, All ſport in the Park is but ſhadow of that pleaſure I find this Book, having a good Book her hand.

Auguſtine before his converſio could not tell how to live witho thoſe pleaſures which he delighte much in, but when his nature w changed, and his heart graciou turned to the Lord, O how ſwe (ſaith he) is it to be without tho former ſweet delights!

Ah! Young men, when on you come to experience the goo neſs and ſweetneſs that is in t Lord, and in his Word and Wa you will then ſit down and griev that you have ſpent more Wine the Cup, than Oyl in the Lamp.

The

There are no pleaſures ſo delighting, ſo ſatisfying, ſo raviſhing, ſo ingaging, and ſo abiding, as thoſe that ſpring from union, and communion with God, as thoſe that flow from a ſenſe of Intereſt in God, and from an humble, and a holy walking with God.

3. Evil.

The third ſin of Youth is raſhneſs.

They many times know little, and fear leſs, and ſo are apt raſhly to run on, and run out often to their hurt, but more often to their hazard. *Exhort Young men to be ſober minded, and diſcreet.* They are apt to be raſh, to be hot-ſpurs: as you may ſee in *Rehoboam*'s Young Counſellers, who counſelled him to tell the people (that groaned under their burthen) that his little finger ſhould be thicker than his Fathers loins, and that he would add to their yoke, and that where-

Ariſt. Polit.

Tit. 2. 6.

1 King 12. 8, 9, 10, 11.

whereas his Father had chastised them with Whips, he would chastise them with Scorpions; this rash counsel proved *Rehoboam's* ruine: yea, *David* himself though a good man, yet being in his wane blood and young, how sadly was he overtaken with rashness? *the Lord God of* Israel *liveth* (saith he) *except thou hadst hastened, and come to meet me, surely there had not been left unto* Nabal, *by the morning light, any that pisseth against the Wall.* And this he binds with an Oath; because the Master was foolishly wilful, the innocent servants must all be woful, and because *Nabal* had been niggardly of his bread, *David* would be Prodigal of his blood.

1 Sam. 25. 34, 35. *Dii proximus ille est, quem ratio, non ira movet. Sen.* He is next to God, whom reason, not anger moveth.

Ah! how unlike a Christian, yea, how below a man, doth *David* carry it, when his blood is up and he a captive to rashness and passion? Rashness will admit of nought for Reason, but what unreasonable self shall dictate for reason; as sloth sel-

dom

dom bringeth actions to good birth, ſo raſhneſs makes them alwayes abortive, elſe well formed: A raſh Spirit is an ungodlike Spirit: a raſh Spirit is a weak Spirit, it is an effeminate Spirit. *A man of understanding, is of an excellent Spirit*, or as the Hebrew will bear, is of a cool Spirit, not raſh and hot, ready at every turn to put out his ſoul in wrath. Raſhneſs unmans a man, it will put a man upon things below manhood. *Heroſtratus* (a hotſpur) an obſcure baſe fellow, did in one night by fire deſtroy the Temple of *Diana* at *Epheſus*, which was two hundred and twenty years in building of all *Aſia*, at the coſt of ſo many Princes, and beautified with the labours and cunning of ſo many excellent workmen; the truth is, there would be no end, ſhould I diſcover the many ſad and great evils that are uſhered into the world by that one evil raſhneſs, which uſually attends youth, &c. And therefore young men decline it, and arm your ſelves againſt it, &c. Pro. 17. 27.

4. Evil.

The fourth sin that ordinarily attends on youth, is mocking and scoffing at religious men, and religious things.

They were young ones, that scoffing and scornfully said to the Prophet, *Go up thou bald-head, go up thou bald-head.* And the young men derided and mocked *Job. But now, they that are younger than I, have me in derision, whose Fathers I would have disdained, to have set with the Dogs of my Flock. Upon my right hand rise the youth, they push away my feet, and they raise up against me the ways of their destruction,* &c. And oh that this age did not afford many such Monsters, who are notable, who are infamous in the black Art of Scoffing and deriding the people of God, and the ways of God.

2 King. 2. 23, 24.

Job 30. 1. 12, 13, 14, 15.

The *Athenians* once scoffed at *Sylla*'s wife, and it had well nigh cost the razing of their City,

was so provoked with the indignity; and will you think it safe to scoff at the people of God, who are the Spouse of Christ, who are as the Apple of the eye, who are the signet of his right hand, his portion, his pleasant portion, his inheritance, his Jewel, his royal Diadem? Ah young men, young men! will you seriously consider how sadly and sorely he hath punished other scoffers and mockers? and by his Judgments on them, be warned never to scoff at the people of God, or his ways more. *Julian* the Emperour was a great scoffer of Christians, but at last he was struck with an Arrow from Heaven, that made him cry out (*Vicisti Galilæe*) thou *Galilean* (meaning our Saviour Christ) hast overcome me. *Felix*, for one malicious scoff, did nothing day and night but vomit blood, till his unhappy soul was separated from his wretched body. *Pereeydes* was consumed by worms alive, for giving

Zech. 2. 1.
Zech. 5.
Deut 32. 9.
Isa. 19. 25.
Joel 2. 15.
Ps. 33. 12.
Isa. 26. 3.

Religion but a nick-name. *Lucian* for barking against Religion like a Dog, was by the just Judgement of God devoured by Dogs. Remember these dreadful Judgements of God on scoffers, and if you like them, then mock on, scoff on, but know that justice will at last be even with you, nay above you.

5. Evil.

The fifth and last evil (that I shall mention) *that attends and waits on youth, is lustfulness, and wantonness.*

2 Tim. 2. 22. Which occasioned aged *Paul* to caution his young *Timothy*, to flee youthful lusts. *Timothy* was a chaste and chastened piece; he was much sanctified and mortified, his graces were high, and corruptions low; he walked up and down this World with dying thoughts, and with a weak, distempered, declining, dying body; his heart was in Heaven, and his foot in the Grave, and yet Youth is such a slippery age, that *Paul* commands him to flee

flee, to poſt from youthful luſts; though *Timothy* was a good man, a weak ſickly man, a marvellous temperate man, drinking water rather than wine, yet he was but a man, yea, a young man; and therefore *Paul's* counſel and command is, that he flee youthful luſts. And *Solomon* who had ſadly experienced the ſlipperineſs of youth, gives this counſel, *Put away the evils of thy fleſh, for childhood and youth are vanity.* Eccl. 11. 10. He was a young man that followed the Harlot to her houſe: Prov. 7. 7, 8, 9, &c. he was young in years and young in knowledge; (*Salazer* upon the words ſaith) that was a happy age that afforded but one ſimple young man among many, whereas late times afford greater ſtore. Ah! too many of the youths of this age, inſtead of flying from youthful luſts, they poſt and purſue after youthful luſts.

Chryſoſtome ſpeaking of youth, ſaith it is (*difficilem, jactabilem, fallibilem, vehementiſſimiſque egentem frenis*) hard to be ruled, eaſie to *Chryſoſt. Homil. 1. Ad populum.*

be drawn away, apt to be deceived, and ſtanding in need of very violent reins.

Lapide. The Ancients did picture youth like a young man naked, with a veil over his face, his right hand bound behind him, his left hand looſe, and time behind him, pulling one thread out of his veil every day, intimating that young men are void of knowledge, and blind, unfit to do good, ready to do evil, till time by little and little makes them wiſer. Well, young man remember this, that the leſs ſparkling and kindling of luſts will firſt or laſt coſt thee groans, and griefs, tears, and terrors enough. Theſe five are the ſins that uſually are waiting and attending on youth, but from theſe the young man in the Text was by Grace preſerved and ſecured, which is more than I dare affirm of all, into whoſe hand this Treatiſe ſhall fall. But though theſe five are the ſins of youth; yet they are not all the ſins of youth, for

you

youth is capable of, and subject to all other sins whatsoever, but these are the special sins that most usually wait and attend on young men, when they are in the spring and morning of their youth.

Other sins attend youth, as 1. Ignorance. 1 Cor. 14 20. 2. Falshood Psal 50.3. 3. Excessive love of liberty 4. Impatience of counsels and reproofs, Je. 31. 18. 19 5. Impudence, Isa. 3. 5. 6. A trifling spirit, Eccles 11. 10. 7. Prodigality. Use.

CHAP. IV.

I shall now hasten to the main Use that I do intend to stand upon, and that is an Use of Exhortation, to all young persons.

Ah Sirs! as you tender the glory of God, the good of your bodies, the joy of your Christian friends, and the salvation of your own souls; be exhorted and perswaded to be really good betimes. It was the praise and honour of *Abijah*, that there was found in him some good thing towards the Lord in the Principle of his child-hood.

Oh that it might be your honour and happiness to be really good betimes, that it might be to you praise, and a Name, that in the

morning of your youth, you have begun to seek the Lord, and to know and love the Lord, and to get an interest and propriety in the Lord; Now that this Exhortation may stick and take,

I beseech you seriously to weigh and ponder these following Motives, or Considerations.

1. Motive.

First consider, *It is an honour to be good betimes.* A young Saint is like the morning Star; he is like a Pearl in a Gold Ring. It is mentioned as a singular honour to the believing *Jews*, that they first trusted in Christ; that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ; this was their praise, their crown, that they were first converted and turned to Christ & Christians. Eph. 1. 12. So St. *Paul* mentioning *Andronicus* and *Junia*, doth not omit this circumstance of praise and honour, that they were in Christ before him. Rom. 16. 7. Salute *Andronicus* and *Junia*, my Kinsmen, and my fellow-prisoners

ners, who are of note among the Apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

And so it was the honour of the house of *Stephanus*, that they were the first fruits of *Achaia*, it was their glory, that they were the first that received, and welcomed the Gospel in *Achaia*. 'Tis a greater honour for a young man to outwrest'e Sin, Satan, Temptation, the World and Lust, than ever *Alexander* the Great could attain unto. It was *Judah* his praise and honour, that they were the first in fetching home *David* their King.

1 Cor. 16. 15.

2 Sam. 19 15.

Ah! Young men, and women, it will be your eternal praise and honour, if you shall be before others, if you shall be the first among many, who shall know the Lord, and seek the Lord, who shall receive the Lord and embrace him; who shall cleave to the Lord and serve him; who shall honour the Lord, and obey him; who shall delight in the Lord, and walk with him. The *Romans* built

Virtues and Honours Temple close together, to shew, that the way to honour was by virtue; and indeed there is no Crown to that which goodness sets upon a mans head; all other honour is fading and withering. *Adonibezek*, a mighty Prince, is suddenly made fellow-commoner with the Dogs. And *Nebuchadnezzar*, a mighty Conquerour, turned a grazing among the Oxen. And *Herod* reduced from a conceited God, to be the most loathsom of men, living carrion, arrested by the vilest of creatures upon the suit of his affronted Creator. And *Haman* feasted with the King one day, and made a feast for Crows the next: I might tell you of *Bajazet*, and *Belisarius*, two of the greatest Commanders in the world, and many others, who have suddenly fallen from the top of worldly honour and felicity, into the greatest contempt and misery, but I shall not at this time; But that honour that rises from mens

Judg. 1. 7.

Dan. 4. 28.

Act. 12. 23.

Esth. 7. 10.

ing gracious betimes is such honour, that the world can neither give nor take; it is honour, it is a Crown that will still be green, and flourishing, it is honour that will bed and board with a man, that will abide with a man under all trials and changes, that will to the grave, that will to heaven with a man.

Ah Sirs! It it is no small honour to you, who are in the spring and morning of your days, that the Lord hath left upon record several instances of his love and delight in young men; he chose *David* a younger Brother, and passed by his elder Brothers: he frowns upon *Esau*, and passes by his door, and lets his love and delight upon *Jacob* the younger brother; he kindly and lovingly accepts of *Abels* person and sacrifice, and rejects both *Cain's* person and sacrifice, though he was the elder Brother. Among all the Disciples *John* was the youngest, and the most and best beloved. There

1 Sam. 16. 11, 12, 13 Rom 9. 12, 13.

Gen. 4. 3, 4, 5, 6.

Joh 13. 23

was

was but one young man that came to Christ, and he came not aright; and all the good that was in him, was but some moral good, and yet Christ loved him, with a love of pity and compassion; the Greek word signifies, to speak friendly, and deal gently with one; and so did Christ with him, all which should exceedingly encourage young men to be good betimes, to be gracious in the morning of their youth; no way to true honour like this, but

Mar. 10. 19, 20, 21.

ἀγαπᾶν.

The sacrifices in the Law were young Lambs, and young Kids, to shew that Christ our sacrifice, should die and suffer for our sins, in the flower of his age.

2 Motive.

Secondly, consider, *Christ loved poor sinners, and gave himself for them, when he was in the prime of his age* (being supposed to be about thirty and three) *and will you put him off with the worst of your time?*

Ah! Young men, young men, Christ gave himself up to death, he made himself an offering for your sins, for your sakes, when he was in the prime and flower of his age, and why then should you put off

Christ

Christ to old age? Did he die for sin in the prime of his age? and will not you dye to sin in the prime of your age? Did he offer himself for you in the spring, and morning of his years? and will not you offer up your selves to him in the spring and morning of your years? O give not Christ cause to say, I dyed for you betimes, but you have not lived to me betimes; I was early in my sufferings for you, but you have not been early in your returning to me; I made haste to compleat your Redemption, but you have made no haste to make sure your Vocation, and Election; I stayed not, I lingred not, but soon suffered what I was to suffer, and quickly did what was to be done for your eternal welfare, but you have stayed, and lingred (like *Lot* in *Sodom*) and have not done what you might have done in order to your everlasting good; in the Primrose of my days I sweat for you

Rom. 12. 1, 2.

2 Pet. 1. 10

Gen. 19. 16

you, I wept for you, I bled for you, I hung upon the Cross for you, I bore the wrath of my Father for you; but you have not in the Primrose of your days, sweat under the sense of Divine displeasure, nor wept over your sins, nor mourned over me, whom you have so often grieved and pierced; I could not be quiet nor satisfied till I had put you into a capacity, into a possibility of salvation, and yet you are well enough quieted and satisfied, though you do not know whether ever you shall be saved.

Zech. 12. 10.

Ah Sirs! how sad would it be with you, if Jesus Christ should secretly thus expostulate with your conscience in this your day! O! how terrible would it be with you, if Christ should thus visibly plead against you, in his great day! Ah! Young men, young men, and women, who are but souls much-left of God, blinded by Satan, and hardened in sin, can hear Jesus Christ speaking

2 Cor. 4. 3, 4.

ing thus to them? I suffered for Sinners betimes, I laid down a ransom for Souls betimes, I pacified my Fathers Wrath betimes, I satisfied my Fathers Justice betimes, I merited grace and mercy for sinners betimes, I brought in an everlasting righteousness upon the world betimes, *&c.* I say, who can hear Jesus Christ speaking thus, and his heart not fall in love and league with Christ, and his soul not unite to Christ, and resign to Christ, and cleave to Christ, and for ever be one with Christ, except it be such that are for ever left by Christ? Well, remember this, (*quanto pro nobis vilior, tanto nobis charior*) the more vile Christ made himself for us, the more dear he ought to be unto us.

Ah! Young men, remember this, when Christ was young, he was tempted and tryed, when he was in the morning of his days, his wounds were deep, his burden weighty, his cup bitter, his sweat pain-

painful, his agony and torment, above conception, beyond expression; when he was young, that blessed head of his was crowned with thorns, and those eyes of his that were purer than the Sun, were put out by the darkness of Death; and those ears of his which now hear nothing but *Hallelujahs* of Saints and Angels, were filled with the blasphemies of the multitude; and that blessed beautiful face of his, which was fairer than the Sons of men, was spit on by beastly filthy wretches; and that gracious mouth and tongue, that spake as never man spake, was slandered and accused of blasphemy; and those hands of his which healed the Sick, which gave out pardons, which swayed a Scepter in Heaven, and another on Earth, were nailed to the Cross; and those feet that were beautiful upon the Mountains, that brought the glad tydings of Peace and Salvation into the World, and that were like unto fine

Nolo vivere sine vulnere, cum te video vulneratum. Bonaventer. Oh my God as long as I see thy wounds, I will never live without wounds.

Aut Deus naturæ patitur, aut mundi machina dissolvitur, said *Dionysius Alexandrinus.* Either the God of nature suffereth, or the frame of the world will be dissolved.

fine brass, were also nailed to the Cross: All these great and sad things did Jesus Christ suffer for you in the prime and flower of his days; and Oh! what an unspeakable Provocation should this be to all young ones, to give up themselves betimes to Christ, to serve, love, honour, and obey him betimes, even in the spring and morning of their youth?

Let the thoughts of a crucified Christ (said one) be never out of your mind; let them be meat and drink unto you, let them be your sweetness and consolation, your honey, and your desire, your reading, and your meditation, your life, death, and resurrection.

3. Motive.

The third Motive or consideration to provoke you to begin to be good betimes, is this, *viz.*

That it is the best and choicest way in the world, to be rich in gracious experiences betimes (which are

The Philosopher once said, *solus sapiens dives*, only the wise man is the rich man.

are the best riches in all the world; as he that sets up for himself betimes, is in the most hopeful way to be rich betimes: So he that is good in good earnest betimes, he is in the ready way, the high-way of being rich in grace, and rich in goodness, they usually prove men of great observation, and great experience.

Ps 63.1, 2. Exod. 3. 3, 19, 22, &c. Ps. 65. 11, 12.

God loves to shew these his beauty, and his glory in his Sanctuary. He delights to cause his glory, and his goodness to pass before such: these shall find all his paths drop marrow and fatness, for these the Lord of Hosts will make a feast of fat things, a feast of Wines on the Lees, of fat things full of marrow, on Wines on the Lees well refined: these shall have all manner of pleasant fruits laid up at their gates for their well-beloved; none have so many choice pledges of Christs love, nor so many sweet kisses of Christs mouth, nor so many embraces in Christs arms, as those souls that are good

Isa. 25. 6.

Cant. 7. 13.

betimes:

betimes: O the grace, the goodness, the sweetness, the fatness that Christ is still a dropping into their hearts: Christ will make their hearts his largest treasury; he'll lay up most of his heavenly treasure in their souls, there he will store up mercies new and old, there he will treasure up all plenty, rarity, and variety, there he will lay up all that heart can wish, or need require: O the many drops of Myrrh that fall from Christs fingers upon their hearts! O the many secrets that Christ reveals in their ears! O the many Love-letters that Christ sends to these! O the many visits that he gives to these! O the turns, the walks that he hath in Paradise with these! there are none in the world for experience, and intelligence to these. Ah! Young men, young men, as you would be rich in the best riches, begin to be good betimes; as there is no riches to spiritual riches, so there is no way

Earthly riches are full of poverty. *Divitiæ corporales paupertatis plenæ sunt.*

way to be rich in these riches, but by beginning to be good (in good earnest) betimes.

If there were any happiness in riches, the Gods would not want them saith *Seneca*.

As for worldly riches, Philosophers have contemned them, and preferred a contemplative life above them, and shall not Christians much more? The Prophet calls them *thick clay*, which will sooner break the back, than lighten the heart; they cannot better the soul, they cannot enrich the soul. Ah! how many thred-bare souls are to be found under silken cloaks and gowns? how often are worldly Riches, like Hang-men, they hide mens faces with a covering, that they may not see their own end, and then they hang them. And if they do not hang you, they will shortly leave you, they make themselves wings and fly away. When one was a commending the Riches and Wealth of Merchants; I do not love that wealth, saith a Heathen, that hangs upon Ropes, if they break, the Ship miscarrieth, and

and all is loſt. He is rich enough (ſaith St. *Jerome*) that lacketh not bread, and high enough in dignity, that is not forced to ſerve.

This worlds wealth that men ſo much deſire,
May well be liken'd to a burning fire;
Whereof a little can do little harm,
But profit much our bodies well to warm:
But take too much, and ſurely thou ſhalt burn;
So too much wealth, to too much woe does turn.

It was an excellent ſaying of *Lewis* of *Bavyer*, Emperour of *Germany* (*hujuſmodi comparandæ ſunt opes, quæ cum naufrago ſimul enatent*) ſuch goods are worth getting and owning, as will not ſink or waſh away, if a Shipwrack happen, but will wade and ſwim out with us; we ſee ſuch are the ſpiritual riches that will attend thoſe, who in the ſpring and morning of their youth, ſhall know the *Lord*, and ſerve the Lord, and get an intereſt in the Lord; and thus much for the third Motive.

The

4. Motive.

The fourth Motive to provoke young ones to be really good betimes, is to consider, that *The present time, the present day is the only season that you are sure of.*

Time past cannot be recalled, and time to come cannot be ascertained. Heb. 3.15. *To day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.* Behold now is the acceptable time, now is the day of salvation; some there be that trifle away their time, and fool away their souls, and their salvation; to prevent this, the Apostle beats upon the Τὰ νῦν, the present opportunity, because, if that be once past, there is no recovering of it; therefore as the Mariner takes the first fair wind to sail; and as the Merchant takes his first opportunity of buying and selling: and as the Husbandman takes the first opportunity of sowing and reaping; so should young men take the present season, the present day (which is their day) to be good to-

2 Cor. 6.2. The whole Earth hangs on a point, so doth Heaven and Eternity on an inch of opportunity.

wards

wards the Lord, to seek him, and serve him, and not to post off the present season, for they know not what another day, another hour, another moment may bring forth: that Door of Grace that is open to day, may be shut to morrow: that golden Scepter of mercy that is held forth in the Gospel this day, may be taken in the next day; that love that this hour is upon the bare knee intreating and beseeching young men to break off their sins by repentance, to return to the Lord, to lay hold on his strength, and be at peace with him, may the next hour be turned into wrath.

Ah! the noble motions that have been lost, the good purposes that have withered, the immortal Souls that have miscarried, by putting off the present season, the present day. St. *Paul* discoursing before *Felix* of Righteousness, and Temperance, and Judgement to come, and in this discourse striking at two special vices

Isa. 27.4,5.

Act. 24.25.

vices that *Felix* was particularly guilty of, he falls a trembling; and being upon the rack to hear such Doctrine, he bids Saint *Paul* depart for that time, and he would call for him at a convenient season; here *Felix* neglects his present season, and we never read, that ever after this, he found a convenient time or season to hear St. *Paul* make an end of the subject he had begun! So Christ made a very fair offer to the Young man in the Gospel, *Go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the Poor, and thou shalt have Treasure in Heaven*; here Christ offers heavenly treasures, for earthly treasures; unmixt treasures, for mixt treasures; perfect treasures, for imperfect treasures; satisfying treasures, for unsatisfying treasures; lasting treasures, for fading treasures; but the young man slips his opportunity, his season, and goes away sorrowful, and we never read more of him.

Mark 12. 22, 23, 24.

Ah! Young men, young men do

do not put off the present season, do not neglect the present day, there is no time yours, but the present time; no day yours, but the present day; and therefore do not please your selves, and feed your selves with hopes of time to come, and that you will repent, but not yet; and lay hold on mercy, but not yet; and give up your selves to the Lord next week, next month, or next year; for that God that hath promised you mercy and favour, upon the day of your return, he hath not promised to prolong your lives, till that day comes. When a Souldier was brought before *Lamaeus*, a Commander, for a miss-behaviour, and pleaded he would do so no more, *Lamaeus* answered (*non licet in bello bis peccare*) no man must offend twice in War: So God (especially in these Gospel-days, wherein the motions of Divine Justice are more smart and quick, than in former days) haply will not

Often consider what the damned would give (were it in their hands) for one season of Grace, for one opportunity of Mercy.

Heb. 3. 2. suffer men twice to neglect the day of grace, and let slip the season of mercy.

Ah! Young men, young men, you say you will be good towards the Lord before you die, but if you are not good towards the Lord to day, you may die to morrow; nay, justice may leave him to be his own executioner to morrow, who will not repent, nor seek the Lord to day. I have read of a certain young man, who being admonished of the evil of his way and course, and pressed to leave his wickedness, by the consideration of Death, Judgement, and Eternity, which was a coming, he answered, what do you tell me of these things, I will do well enough, for when Death comes, I will speak but three words, and will help all; and so still he went on in his sinful ways, but in the end coming to a Brigg on Horse back, to go over a deep water, the Horse stumbling, and he labouring to recover his Horse, but

but could not, at last he lets go the bridle, and gave up himself and Horse to the waters, and was heard to say these three words, *Devil take all.* Here were three dreadful words indeed, and an example (with a witness) for all young men to beware, who think to repent with a three word repentance at last. *Diabolus capiat omnia.*

Otho, the Emperour, slew himself with his own hands, but slept so soundly the night before, that the Grooms of his Chamber heard him snort.

Young men, I will suppose you to be good accountants; now if you please to count the number, and mark the age of the Sacrifices in the Old Testament, and you shall find more Kids, and Lambs offered, than Goats, and old Sheep: You have no lease of your lives, you are not sure that you shall live to *Isaac*'s age, to live till your eyes wax dim; you are not sure that you shall live to *Jacob*'s years, and dye, leaning up- *Plutarch* reporteth the like of *Cato.* Gen. 17.1. Heb. 11.21.

on the top of a staff. You read of them who dye in their youth, and whose lives are among the unclean. Slip not the present season, neglect not this day of grace, let not Satan keep your souls and Christ any longer asunder, by telling of you, that you are too young, that hereafter will be time enough. St. *Austine* tells us, that by this very temptation, the Devil kept him off from receiving of Christ, from closing with Christ, seven years together, he could no sooner think of inquiring after Christ, of getting an interest in Christ, of leaving off his sinful courses, &c. but Satan would be still a suggesting, thou art too young to leave thy drunkenness, thou art too young to leave thy *Dalilah*, to leave thy Harlots, till at last he cry'd out, how long shall I say, it is too soon? Why may I not repent to day? and lay hold on Jesus Christ to day? Oh young men! this is your day, this

Job 36. 14.

As out of the bough of a tree are taken wedges to cleave it in pieces, so out of our own heart, is an work Enemies to destroy us.

this is your season, if you will not now hearken and obey, you may perish for ever. *Cesar* had a Letter given him by *Artemidorus*, that morning he went to the Senate, wherein notice was given him of all the conspiracy of his murtherers; so that with ease he might have prevented his death, but neglecting the reading of it was slain, he slipt his season, and dyes for it. Ah! how many for slipping gracious seasons and opportunities, have dyed for ever? Soul opportunities are more worth than a thousand Worlds; mercy is in them, grace and glory is in them, Heaven and Eternity is in them.

5. Motive.

Fifthly, To provoke you to be good betimes; Consider,

How just it is with God to reserve the dregs of his wrath for them, who reserve the dregs of their days for him.

How can a Husband imbrace that Wife in her old age, who hath ſpent all the time of her youth in following after ſtrangers? Will any man receive ſuch into his ſervice, who have all their days ſerved his enemies, and received ſuch wounds, blows, and bruiſes, that render them unfit for his ſervice?

Deut. 32. 6. Ah! Young men, young men, *do not thus fooliſhly and unwiſely requite the Lord*, for all his patient waiting, his gracious wooing, and his merciful dealing with you. Ah! do not put off God to old age; for old, lame, and ſick Sacrifices rarely reach as high as Heaven. Is not old age very unteachable? in old age are not men very unapt to take in, and as unapt to give out? In old age (oftentimes) men are men, and no men, they have eyes, but ſee not; ears, but hear not; tongues, but ſpeak not; feet, but walk not. An aged man is but a moving Anatomy, or a living mortuary; now how unlovely, how uncomely, how unwor-

Multa ſenem circumveniunt incommoda, Horatius. Many are the inconveniencies that do encompaſs an old man.

unworthy, nay, how incenſing, how provoking a thing muſt this needs be, when men will dally with God, and put him off till their doting days have overtaken them, till their ſpring is paſt, their ſummer over-paſt, and they arrived at the fall of the leaf, yea till winter-colours have ſtained their heads with gray and hoary hairs? How provoking this is, you may ſee in thoſe ſad words of *Jeremiah*, Jer. 22. 21, 22. *I ſpake unto thee in thy proſperity, but thou ſaidſt I will not hear, this hath been thy manner from thy youth, and thou obeyeſt not my voice*: But will God put up this at their hands? no, therefore it follows in the next verſe, *Surely thou ſhalt be aſhamed and confounded for all thy wickedneſs.*

The reproach of the evil of wickedneſs is not to be added to old age. (*Solet enim ſenectus eſſe deformis, infirma, obliviosa, edentula, lucroſa, indocilis & moleſta*) ſaith Plutarch, in *Apothegm. Rom.* For old age uſeth to be deformed, weak forgetful, toothleſs, covetous, unteachable, unquiet.

On that young men would let this Scripture lie warm every morning upon their hearts, that ſo they may not dare to put off God, and provoke him to their own confuſion! though you are young, and in your ſtrength,

yet are you ſtronger than God? can you make your party good with him? if you muſt needs be a provoking, provoke them that are your matches, and do not contend with him that is mightier than you, that can command you into nothing, or into Hell at pleaſure.

6. Motive.

Sixthly, Conſider, *That the ſooner you are good on earth, the greater will your reward be in* Heaven.

The ſooner you are gracious, the more at laſt you will be glorious. You read in the Scripture of a reward, of a great reward, and of a full reward; now, *thoſe that are good betimes*, that know, ſeek, ſerve, and love the Lord, in the ſpring and morning of their youth, they are in the faireſt way of gaining the greateſt, and the fulleſt reward.

Pſ. 58. 11. Gen. 15. 1 Pſ. 19. 11. Mat. 5. 12 Heb. 10. 35 John 2. 8.

And this I ſhall make clear, by that which follows.

Firſt, the ſooner any man begins to be really good, the more

more good he will do in this world. Now the more good any man doth on earth, the more glory he shall have in Heaven. Therefore my beloved Brethren, *Be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know, that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.* 1 Cor. 15. 58.

Mans wages, mans reward, shall be according to his works; he that doth most work here, shall have most reward hereafter.

God will at last proportion the one to the other, the reward to the work; *He which soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly, and he which soweth bountifully, shall reap bountifully.* 2 Cor. 9. Though no man shall be rewarded for his works, yet God will at last measure out happiness and blessedness to his people, according to their service, faithfulness, diligence, and work in this world. Rom. 2. 5, 6, 7. Grace is glory in the bud, and glory is grace at the full; glory is nothing else but a bright constellation of graces;

happineſs, nothing but the quinteſſence of holineſs. Grace and Glory differ (*non ſpecie ſed gradu*) in degree, not kind, as the learned ſpeak. Grace and Glory differ very little, the one is the ſeed, the other is the flower; Grace is Glory militant, and Glory is Grace triumphant; and a man may as well plead for equal degrees of Grace in this World, as he may plead for equal degrees of Glory in the other World. Surely the more grace here, the more glory hereafter, and the more work Chriſtians do on earth, the more glory they ſhall have in Heaven; and the ſooner men begin to be good, the more good they will do in this world; and the more they do here, the more they ſhall have hereafter. Philoſophers ſeem to weigh our vertues with our vices, and according to the preponderation of either, denominate us good or bad, and ſo deliver us up to reward or puniſhment.

No

No man can commend good works magnificently enough (saith *Luther*) for one work of a Christian is more pretious than Heaven and Earth, and therefore all the world cannot sufficiently reward one good work. And in another place saith the same Author, if I might have my desire, I would rather chuse the meanest work of a Country Christian (or poor Maid) than all the victories and triumphs of *Alexander* the Great, and of *Julius Cæsar*.

And again, Whatsoever the Saints do, though never so small and mean, it is great and glorious, because they do all in Faith, and by the Word, saith the same Author. To prevent mistakes, you must remember, that the works that Jesus Christ will reward at last, are supernatural works: they are 1. Works of God. 2. Wrought from God. 3. For God. 4. In God. 5. According to God; they are works that flow from supernatural Principles, and they

they are directed to ſupernatural ends, and performed in a ſupernatural may; now the ſooner a man begins to be good, the more he will abound in theſe good works, and the more doubtleſs any way abounds in ſuch good works on earth, the greater reward he ſhall have in Heaven; yet it muſt not be forgotten, that the beſt actions, the beſt works of Hypocrites, and all men out of Chriſt, are but (*ſplendida peccata*) fair and ſhining ſins, beautiful abominations. And as the *Phœnix* in *Arabia* gathers ſweet odoriferous ſticks together, and then blows them with her wings, and burns her ſelf with them: ſo many a carnal Profeſſor burns himſelf with his own good works, that is, by his expecting and truſting to receive that by his works, that is only to be received and expected from Jeſus Chriſt. Though all that man can do towards the meriting of Heaven, is no more than the lifting up of

David made uſe of his bow, but did not truſt to his bow The Dove made uſe of her wings, but did not truſt in her wings, but in the Ark.

of a ſtraw towards the meriting of a Kingdom; yet ſuch a proud piece man is, that he is ready enough to ſay with proud *Vega*, (*Cœlum gratis non accipiam*) I will not have Heaven of freecoſt. A proud heart would fain have that of debt, which is meerly of grace, and deſires that to be of purchaſe, which God hath intended to be of free mercy, which made one to ſay, that he would ſwim through a Sea of Brimſtone, that he might come to Heaven at the laſt: but he that ſwims not thither through the Sea of Chriſts blood, ſhall never come there; man muſt ſwim thither, not through brimſtone, but through blood, or he miſcarries for ever.

Merces non eſt debita ſed gratuita.

Secondly, Again, the ſooner a man begins to be good, the more ſerviceable he will be to others, and the more he will provoke others to good; now all the good that you provoke others to, by Counſel, or Carriage, ſhall be put

put down to your account (as all the sins that men provoke others to are put down to their accounts: *David* did but send a Letter concerning the death of *Uriah*, and the charge cometh, *Thou hast slain* Uriah *with the Sword*) the more I stir up others to sow, the more at last I shall reap, the sooner a man begins to be good, the more good he will do, the more serviceable he will be in the Town or City where he dwells, in the Family where he lives, among his Relations (Wife, Children, Kindred, Servants, *&c.*) with whom he converses.

2 Sam. 12. 8, 9. Isa. 38. 3. Neh. 13. 14.

The sooner a man begins to be gracious, the sooner and the more useful will his arts, his parts, his gifts, his graces, his mercies, his experiences, his life, his labours, his prayers, his counsels, his examples be, to all that are with him, to all that are about him.

Synesius speaks of some, who having a treasure of rare abilities in them, would as soon part with their hearts, as their conceptions; but such are rather monsters than men.

Lilmod Lelammed, we therefore learn

learn that we may teach, is a Proverb among the *Rabbins*. And I do therefore lay in, and lay up (ſaith the Heathen) that I may draw forth again, and lay out for the good of many.

Ah! Young men, Young men, as you would be uſeful and ſerviceable to many, begin to be good betimes, and to lay in, and lay up, and lay out betimes, for the profit and advantage of others. *Auguſtine* accounted nothing his own, that he did not communicate to others. The Bee doth ſtore her Hive out of all ſorts of Flowers, for the common benefit. 'Tis a baſe and unworthy ſpirit, for a man to make himſelf the centre of all his actions. The very Heathen man could ſay, that a mans Country, and his Friends, and others challenge a great part of him: And indeed the beſt way to do our ſelves good, is to be a doing good to others; the beſt way to gather, is to ſcatter; Memorable

morable is that ſtory of *Pyrhias*, a Merchant of *Ithaca*, who at Sea eſpying an aged man a Captive in a Pirates Ship, took compaſſion on him, and redeemed him; and bought his Commodities which the Pirate had taken from him, which were certain barrels of Pitch. The old man perceiving, that not for any good ſervice he could do him, nor for the gain of that commodity, but meerly out of charity and pity he had done this, diſcovered a great maſs of treaſure hidden in the Pitch, whereby the Merchant in a very ſhort time became very rich, at which very time God made that word good; *He*

2 Cor. 9. 6. *that ſoweth liberally, ſhall reap liberally*; and that word, *The liberal ſoul ſhall be made fat*;

Pro 11. 25. and that word, *The liberal deviſeth liberal*

Iſa. 32. 8. *things*; *and by liberal things ſhall he ſtand*. It is fabled of *Midas*, that whatever he touched, he turned into Gold: It is certain, that a liberal hand, a liberal heart turns all into Gold, into

gain

gain, as Scripture and Experience do abundantly evidence: now if you put all these things together, nothing is more evident, than that those that begin to be good betimes, are in the ready way, the high-way to be high in Heaven, when they shall cease from breathing on earth, and therefore young men, as you would be high in Heaven, as you would have a great reward, a full reward, a massie weighty Crown, O labour to be good betimes! labour to get acquaintance with the Lord, and an interest in the Lord, in the spring and morning of your days.

7 Motive.

The seventh Motive, or Consideration to provoke and incite you to be good betimes, is, *To consider that the Lord is very much affected, and taken with your seeking of him, and following after him in the spring and morning of your youth.*

Go

Jer. 2. 2. Go and cry in the ears of *Jerusalem*, saying, *I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the Wilderness, in a Land that was not sown.*

Ah! how kindly, how sweetly did the Lord take this at their hands, that they followed him in their youth; while their bones were full of marrow, while they were strong and fit for service, while nature was fresh, lively, and vigorous; In the Law; God called for the first of all things, he required not only the first fruits, but the very first of the first: The first of the first fruits of thy Land, *Thou shalt bring into the House of the Lord thy God.* God is the first being, the first good, and therefore deserves the first of the first, and the best of the best, the first and the best is not too good for him, who is goodness itself. God, in that of *Levit.* 2. 14. is so passionately set upon having the first of the first, that he will not

Exod. 23. 19.

'Tis truly said of God, that he is *Omnia super omnia.*

not stay till the green ears of Corn be ripe, but will have the green ears of Corn dryed in the fire, lest he should lose his longing.

As many young women, and sickly children, cannot stay till the fruit be ripe, but must have it while it is green; even so saith God, my heart, my desires are so vehemently set upon the first fruits, the first things, that I cannot stay, I cannot satisfie my self without them; and what would God teach us by all this, but to serve him with the first fruits of our age, the primrose of our Child-hood, the morning of our youth? God hath given you of the best, do not put him off with the worst, with the worst of your time, the worst of your days, the worst of your strength, lest he swear in his wrath, that you shall never enter into his rest.

8. Motive.

The eighth Motive or Consideration to provoke you to be good

Early Converts will never have cause to say, as that despairing Pope said, the Cross could do him no good, he had so often sold it away.

good betimes, to seek and serve the Lord in the morning of your youth, is, to consider that *This may be a special means to prevent many black temptations, and an incouragement to withstand all temptations, that you may meet with from a tempting Devil, and a tempting World.*

An early turning to the Lord will prevent many temptations to despair, many temptations to neglect the means openly, to despise the means secretly: many temptations about the being of God, the goodness, faithfulness, truth and justice of God; temptations to despair, temptations to lay violent hands on a mans self; temptations to question all that God hath said, and that Christ hath suffered, arises many times from mens delaying and putting off God to the last; all which, with many others, are prevented by a mans seeking and serving of the Lord in the spring and morning of his youth. It is reported of the Harts of Sy-

this,

this, that they teach their young ones to leap from Bank to Bank, from Rock to Rock, from one Turf to another (by leaping before them) by which means, when they are hunted, no beast of prey can overtake them; so when persons exercise themselves in Godliness, when they are young, when they leap from one measure of holiness to another, when they are in the morning of their days, Satan, that mighty Hunter after Souls may pursue them with his temptations, but he shall not overtake them, he shall not prevail over them. As you see in *Moses*, *Joseph*, *Daniel*, and the three Children: these knew the Lord, and gave up themselves to the Lord in the prime and Primrose of their youth, and these were all temptation-proof; Satan and the World pursued them, but could not overtake them; when the Devil and the World had done their worst, the young mens Bows abode

Heb. 11. Gen. 39. Dan. 3. *ult.*

abode in strength, and their hand (to resist) were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of *Jacob*. *Ego non sum Ego*, said the young Convert, when tempted, I am not the man that I was.

Gen. 49. 23, 24.

Luther tells of a young Virgin that used to resist all temptations with this, *Christiana sum*, I am a Christian. Early Converts may say, when tempted, as he, tell me not Satan what I have been, but what I am, and will be; or as he in the like case, whatsoever I was, I am now in Christ, a new Creature, and that is it which troubleth thee; or as he, the more desperate my disease was, the more I admire the Physician. Yea thou mayest yet strain it a peg higher, and say, the greater my sins were, the greater is my honour. As the Devils which once Mary *Magdalen* had, are mentioned for her glory. When *Pyrrhus* tempted *Fabricius* the first day with an Elephant, so huge and monstrous a beast, as before he had

Bernard. Beza. Augustin. Such as thou art now, I was once, but such as I am now, thou wilt never be, said *Diogenes* to a base fellow that told him, he had once been a forger of money.

seen, the next day with money and promises of honour; he answered, fear not thy force, I am too wise for thy fraud.

Ah! Young men, young men, as you would be free from the saddest and darkest temptations; and as you would be armed against all temptations, O labour as for life, to be good betimes! seek and serve the Lord in the morning of your youth; no way like this for the preventing Earth-quakes, Heart-quakes, stormy days, and winter nights, &c.

9. Motive.

The ninth Motive or Consideration to stir up young men to be good betimes, to seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of their youth, is, *To consider the worth and excellency of Souls.*

A Soul is a spiritual immortal substance, it is capable of the knowledge of God, it is capable of Union with God, of communion

Luk. 23. 13
Mat. 19. 28.
Acts 7. *ult.*

Phil. 1. 23. nion with God, and of a bleſſed and happy fruition of God.

Heb. 2. 13, 14, 15, 16. Chriſt left his Fathers boſom for the good of Souls; he aſſumed mans nature for the ſalvation of mans Soul, Chriſt prayed for Souls, he ſweat for Souls, he wept for ſouls, he bled for ſouls, he hung on the Croſs for ſouls, he trod the Wine-Preſs of his Fathers Wrath for Souls, he dyed for Souls, he roſe again from Death for Souls, he aſcended for Souls, he intercedes for Souls, and all the Glorious preparations that he hath been a making in Heaven theſe ſixteen hundred years, is for Souls.

Iſa. 63 3, 4.

Joh. 14. 1, 2, 3.

Ah! Young men, young men, do nor play the Courtier with your pretious Souls, the Courtier doth all things late, he riſes late, dines late, ſups late, goes to bed late, repents late.

Ah Sirs! the good of your Souls is before all, and above all other things in the World, to be

firſt

first regarded and provided for, and that partly, because it is the best and more noble part of man, and partly because therein mostly and properly is the Image of God stampt, and partly because it is the first converted, and partly because it shall be the first and most glorified.

O anima Dei insignita imagine, dispensata fide, donata spiritu. Bern.

Ah! Young men, young men, if they be worse than Infidels, that make no provision for their Families, what monsters are they that make not provision for their own souls? this will be bitterness in the end.

1 Tim 5.8.

Cæsar Borgius being sick to death, lamenting said, When I lived, I provided for every thing but death; now I must die, and am unprovided to die; this was a Dart at his heart, and it will at last be a Dagger at yours, who feast your bodies, but starve your souls; who make liberal provision for your ignoble part, but no provision for your more noble part.

If they deserve a hanging, who feast their Slaves, and starve their Wives, that make provision for their enemies, but none for their friends; how will you escape hanging in Hell, who make provision for every thing, yea, for your very lusts, but make no provision for your immortal Souls? We hate the *Turk*, for selling Christians for slaves, and what shall we think then of those who sell themselves, their pretious Souls, for toys and trifles that cannot profit, who practically say, what once a prophane Noble man of *Naples* verbally said, *viz.* that he had two souls in his body, one for God, and another for whosoever would buy it.

Jam. 4. Hos. 7. 2, 3, 13.

Callenucius relates this story.

Ah! Young men, young men, do not pawn your souls, do not sell your souls, do not exchange away your souls, do not trifle and fool away your pretious souls, they are Jewels, more worth than a thousand worlds, yea, than heaven and earth; if they are safe, all is safe, but if they are lost, all is lost,

loſt, God loſt, and Chriſt loſt, and the ſociety of glorious Angels and bleſſed Saints loſt, and Heaven loſt, and that for ever. *Granatenſis* tells of a Woman that was ſo affected with ſouls miſcarrying, that ſhe beſought God to ſtop up the paſſage into Hell with her ſoul and body, that none might have entrance.

Ah! that all young perſons were ſo affected with the worth and excellency of their ſouls, and ſo allarmed with the hazard and danger of loſing their ſouls, as that they may in the ſpring and morning of their days, enquire after the Lord, and ſeek him, and ſerve him with all their might, that ſo their pretious and immortal ſouls may be ſafe and happy for ever; but if all this will not do, then in the laſt place,

10. Motive.

Tenthly, Conſider, Young men; *That God will at laſt bring you to a reckoning*; He will at

last bring you to Judgment, *Rejoyce, O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart chear thee in the dayes of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all these things, God will bring thee unto Judgment.* In these words you have two things: First, an Ironical concession, he bids him rejoyce, &c. he yields him what he would have by an Irony, by way of mockage and bitter scoff. Now thou art young, and strong, lively, and lusty, and thy bones are full of marrow, thou art resolved to be proud, and scornful, to indulge the flesh, and to follow thy delights and pleasures, well, take thy course if thou dares, or if thou hast a mind to it, if thy heart be so set upon it, *Rejoyce in thy Youth*, &c. The Second is a commination, or a sad and severe premonition. But know thou, that for all these things, God will bring thee unto judgment; will bring thee, thee

Eccl. 11 9.

Hierom still thought, that that voice was in his ears (*Surgite mortui, & venite ad judicium*) arise you dead, and come to judgment.

these words import two things; first, the unwillingness of youth to come to Judgment; secondly, the unavoidableness, that youth must come to Judgment; but how soon you shall be brought to judgment, is only known to God.

St. *Augustine* confesses in one of his Books that as long as his Conscience was gnawed with the guilt of some youthful lust he was once inflamed with; the very hearing of a day of Judgment, was even a Hell to him.

Histories tell us of a young man, who being for some Capital offence condemned to dye, grew gray in one nights space; and was therefore pitied, and spared.

Ah! Young men, young men, that the serious thoughts of this great day, may put you upon breaking off the sins of your youth; and the dedicating of your selves to the Knowledge, Love, and Service of the Lord, in

the ſpring and flower of your days. Ah! young men, conſider the errors of your lives, the wickedneſs of your hearts, the ſinfulneſs of your ways, and that ſtrict account that e're long you muſt be brought to, before the Judge of all the World.

The Heathens themſelves had ſome kind of dread and expectation of ſuch a day; and therefore when *St. Paul* ſpake of Judgment to come, *Felix* trembled, though a Heathen.

Act. 24. 25

The Philoſophers had ſome dreams of a ſevere day of account, as appeareth by *Plato's Georgi*, and many paſſages in *Tully*, &c.

The bringing into Judgment is a thing which is known by reaſon, and is clear by the light of Nature; Wherefore in *Auſtria* one of the Nobles dying, who had lived fourſcore and thirteen years, and had ſpent all his life in pleaſures and delights, never being troubled with any infirmity, and this being told to *Frederick* the Emperour; from hence, ſaith he, we may conclude, the ſouls immortality; for if there be a God that

that ruleth this world (as Divines and Philosophers do teach) and that he is just no one denyeth; surely there are other places to which souls after death do go, and do receive for their deeds, either reward or punishment, for here we see that neither rewards are given to the good, nor punishments to the evil. *Æneas Sylvius.*

Ah! Young men, knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, and the terrour of this day, Oh! that you would be perswaded to flee from the wrath to come; to cast away the Idols of your souls, to repent and be converted in the Primrose of your youth, that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; or else wo, wo to you that ever you were born. 2 Cor. 5 9, 10, 11 Act. 3. 19

I have read a Story of one; who being risen from the dead, and being asked in what condition he was, he made answer, no man doth believe, no man doth

believe, no man doth believe. And being further asked what he meant by that repetition, he answered, no man doth believe how exactly God examineth, how strictly God judgeth, how severely he punisheth. Oh! that the ways of most young persons did not declare to all the world that they do not, and that they will not believe the dread, and terrour of that day, that will admit of no Plea, nor place for Apology or Appeal: the highest and last Tribunal can never be appealed from, or repealed.

The *Turks* have a tradition, and frantick opinion, that wicked men shall at the great day carry their sins in hatchets after their Captain *Cain*, but well would it be for them, if this should be all their punishment in that great day.

Now if for all that hath been said, you are resolved to spend the flower of your days, and the prime of your strength, in the service of sin and the world, then know that no tongue can express, no heart can conceive, that trouble of mind, that terrour of soul, that horror of conscience, that fear and amazement, that weeping and wailing, that crying and roaring, that sighing and groaning, that

that cursing and banning, that stamping & tearing, that wringing of hands, and gnashing of teeth, that certainly shall attend you, when God shall bring you into Judgment for all your looseness, and lightness, for all your wickedness and wantonness, for all your prophaneness and baseness, for all your neglect of God, your grieving the Comforter, your trampling under foot the blood of a Saviour, for your despising of the Means, for your prizing Earth above Heaven, and the pleasures of this World, above the pleasures that be at Gods right Hand.

St. *Chrysostom* speaking of this day, saith, for Christ this day to say depart from me, is a thing more terrible than a thousand Hells, *Chry. Hom ad Pop. Antioch*

Oh! how will you wish in that day, when your sins shall be charged on you, when Justice shall be armed against you, when Conscience shall be gnawing within you, when the World shall be a flaming Fire about you, when the Gates of Heaven shall be shut against you, and the flames of Hell ready to take hold of you, when

Angels and Saints shall sit in Judgment upon you; and for ever turn their faces from you when evil spirits shall be terrifying of you, and Jesus Christ for ever disowning of you; how will you (I say) wish in that day, that you had never been born, or that you might now be unborn, or that your Mothers Wombs had proved your Tombs? O how will you then wish to be turn'd into a bird, a beast, a stock, a stone, a toad, a tree! Oh that our immortal souls were mortal! O that we were nothing! O that we were any thing but what we are!

John Damasc. & Author Anonym. de quat. Novissim. Impress. Daven. Ann. 1494

I have read a remarkable story of a King that was heavy, and sad, and wept, which when his Brother saw, he asked him why he was so pensive? Because (saith he) I have judged others, and now I must be judged my self: And why (saith his Brother) do you so take on for this, it will (haply) be a long time ere that day come, and besides, that is but a slight matter.

ter. The King said little to it for the present.

Now it was a custom in that Country, when any had committed Treason, there was a Trumpet sounded at his door in the night time, and he was next day brought out to be executed; now the King commanded a Trumpet to be sounded at his Brothers door in the night time, who awakening out of his sleep, when he heard it arose, and came quaking, and trembling to the King, How now said the King? what's the matter you are so affrighted? I am said he attached of Treason, and next morning I shall be executed; Why, saith the King to him again, are you so troubled at that, knowing that you shall be judged by your Brother, and for a matter that your Conscience tells you, you are clear of? How much more therefore may I be afraid, seeing that God shall judge me, and not in a matter that my Conscience frees me

of

of, but of that whereof I am guilty? and besides this, if the worst come, it is but a temporaty death you shall die, but I am liable to death eternal, both of body and soul. I will leave the Application to those young persons, that put this day afar off, and whom no arguments will move to be good betimes, and to acquaint themselves with the Lord in the morning of their youth.

But now to those young men and women, who begin to seek, serve, and love the Lord in the Primrose of their days, the day of judgement will be to them, (*melodia in aure, jubilum in corde*) like musick in the ear, and a Jubilee in the heart, this day will be to them, a day of Refreshing, a day of Redemption, a day of Vindication, a day of Coronation, a day of Consolation, a day of Salvation, it will be to them a Marriage day, a Harvest day, a Pay day: Now the Lord will pay them for all the prayers they have

Acts 3. 19, 20, 21, 22. Mic. 7. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. Rev. 19 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 Mat. 25 34 to ver. 41.

have made, for all the Sermons they have heard, for all the tears they have shed: in this great day Christ will remember all the individual Offices of Love and Friendship shewed to any of his; now he will mention many things for their honour and comfort, that they never minded, now the least and lowest acts of Love and Pity towards his, shall be interpreted as a special kindness shewed to himself. Now the Crown shall be set upon their heads, and the Royal Robe put upon their backs, now all the World shall see that they have not served the Lord for nought: Now Christ will pass over all their weaknesses, and make honourable mention of all the Services they have performed, of all the mercies they have improved, and of all the great things that for his Name and Glory they have suffered.

b 1 Tim. 4. 8 Mal 3. 17, 18.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Quest. But here an apt question may be moved.

Whether at this great day, the sin of the Saints shall be brought into the judgment of discussion and discovery or no, whether the Lord will in this day publickly manifest, Proclaim, and make mention of the sins of his people, or no?

I humbly judge according to my present light, that he will not, and my reasons for it are these, *viz.*

The first is drawn from Christs judicial proceedings in the last day, set down largely and clearly, in the 25. of *Matthew*, where he enumerateth only the good works they had done, but takes no notice of the spots and blots, of the stains, and blemishes, of the infirmities, and enormities of the weaknesses and wickednesses of his people. My

Deut. 32. 4,5,6

Second Reason is taken from Christs vehement protestations, that

that they shall not come in to Judgment, John 5. 24. *Verily, Verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.* Those words, shall not come into condemnation, are not rightly translated, the Original is εἰς κρίσιν, shall not come into Judgment, not into damnation, as you read it in all your English Books; I will not say, what should put men upon this Exposition, rather than a true translation of the Original word; further, it is very observable, that no Evangelist useth this double asseveration but St. *John*, and he never useth it, but in matters of greatest weight and importance, and to shew the earnestness of his Spirit, and to stir us up to better attention, and to put the thing asserted out of all question, and beyond all contradiction; as when we would put a thing for ever out of all question, we do it by

Vide Aquin. 87. Suppl. est. in l. 4. Sen. dist. 47.

Joh. 1. 51. ch. 3. 3, 11. ch. 6. 26, 32, 47, 53, &c.

a-double asseveration, verily, verily 'tis so, &c.

Thirdly, because his not bringing their sins into Judgment, doth most and best agree with many pretious and glorious expressions that we find scattered (as so many shining, sparkling Pearls) up and down in Scripture; as

First, With those of Gods blotting out the sins of his people. *I, even I am he, that blotteth out thy transgressions, for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins.* Isa.43.25. *I have blotted out, as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins.* Isa.44.22.

Who is this that blots out transgressions? he that hath the keys of Heaven and Hell at his girdle, that opens and no man shuts, that shuts and no man opens, he that hath the power of life and death, of condemning and absolving, of killing and making alive, he it is that blotteth out transgressions: if an Under Officer should blot out an Indictment, that perhaps might do

do a man no good, a man might for all that be at last, cast by the Judge: but when the Judge or King shall blot out the indictment with their own hand, then the Indictment cannot return; now this is every Believers case and happiness.

Secondly, to those glorious expressions of Gods not remembring of their sins any more, *Isa.* 43. 25. *And I will not remember thy sins; And they shall teach no more every man his Neighbour, and every man his Brother, saying, Know ye the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them, to the greatest of them, saith the Lord, for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.* So the Apostle, *For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins, and their iniquities will I remember no more.* Jer. 31. 34. Heb. 8. 12.

And again, the same Apostle saith, *This is the Covenant that I will make with them; After those days,*

days, saith the Lord; *I will put my Laws into their heart, and in their minds will I write them, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.*

Heb. 10. 17 That which *Cicero* said flatteringly of *Cæsar*, is truly affirmed of God, *Nihil oblivisci solet præter injurias*, he forgetteth nothing but the wrongs that daily are done him by his.

The meaning is, their iniquities shall be quite forgotten, I will never mention them more, I will never take notice of them more, they shall never hear more of them from me: though God hath an Iron memory to remember the sins of the wicked, yet he hath no memory to remember the sins of the righteous.

Thirdly, His not bringing their Sins into Judgement, doth most and best agree with those blessed expressions, of his casting their Sins into the depth of the Sea, and of his casting them behind his back. *He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us, he will subdue our iniquities, and thou wilt cast all their Sins into the depths of the Sea.* Where sin is once Pardoned, the Remission

Mic. 7. 19.

stands

ſtands never to be repealed; pardoned ſin ſhall never come in account againſt the pardoned man, before God any more, for ſo much doth this borrowed ſpeech import: If a thing were caſt into a River, it might be brought up again, or if it were caſt upon the Sea, it might be diſcerned and taken up again, but when it is caſt into the depths, the bottom of the Sea, it can never be buoyed up again.

By the Metaphor in the Text, the Lord would have us to know, the ſins pardoned ſhall riſe no more, they ſhall never be ſeen more, they ſhall never come on the account more, he will ſo drown their ſins, that they ſhall never come up before him the ſecond time.

And ſo much that other Scripture imports; *Behold, for Peace I had great bitterneſs; But thou haſt in love to my Soul delivered it from the Pit of Corruption;* Iſa. 38. 17.

for

for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back: these last words are a borrowed speech, taken from the manner of men, who are wont to cast behind their backs, such things as they have no mind to see, regard or remember. A gracious soul hath always his sins before his face (*I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me*) and therefore no wonder if the Lord cast them behind his back. The Father soon forgets, and casts behind his back, those faults that the Child remembers, and hath always in his eyes; so doth the Father of Spirits.

Psal. 51. 3.

Fourthly, *His not bringing their sins into Judgment*, doth best agree with that sweet and choice expression of Gods pardoning the sins of his people.

And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me. So in *Micah*,

Jer. 33. 8.

Who

Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgressions of the remnant of his heritage (as though he would not see it, but wink at it) *he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in Mercy.* The Hebrew word, (*Nose* from *Nasa*) that is here rendered, pardoned, signifies a taking away; when God pardons sin, he takes it clear away, that if it should be sought for, yet it could not be found, as the Prophet speaks; *In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of* Israel *shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of* Judah, *and they shall not be found, for I will pardon them whom I reserve*; and these words, *and passeth by*, in the (afore-cited) seventh of *Micah*, and the 18. according to the Hebrew (*Vegnober Gnal*) is *and passeth over, God passeth over the transgression of his heritage*; that is, he takes no notice of it, as a man in a deep muse, or as one that hath haste of business, seeth not

Mic. 7. 18.

Jer. 50. 20.

עבר *Gnabar*, he passed over.

not things before him, his mind being buſied about other matters, he neglects all to mind his buſineſs.

As *David*, when he ſaw in *Mephibloſheth* the feature of his friend *Jonathan*, took no notice of his lameneſs, or any other defect, or deformity: So God beholding in his people, the glorious Image of his Son, winks at all their faults and deformities, which made *Luther* ſay, *Do with me what thou will, ſince thou haſt pardoned my ſin*; and what is it to pardon ſin, but not to mention ſin? Iſa. 40 1,2.

Fifthly, *His not bringing their ſins into the Judgment of Diſcuſſion and Diſcovery*, doth beſt agree to thoſe expreſſions of forgiving, and covering; *Bleſſed is he whoſe tranſgreſſion is forgiven, whoſe ſin is covered.* In the Original it is in the plural *Bleſſednesſes*, ſo here is a plurality of Bleſſings, a chain of Pearls. Pſal. 32. 1.

The like expreſſion you have in the 85. *Pſalm*, and the ſecond

Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their Sin. Selah. For the understanding of these Scriptures aright, take notice, that to Cover, is a Metaphorical expression, Covering is such an action which is opposed to disclosure; to be covered, it is to be so hid and closed, as not to appear. Some make the Metaphor from filthy, loathsome objects, which are covered from our eyes, as dead carcasses are buried under the ground; some from Garments, that are put upon us to cover our nakedness, others from the *Egyptians* that were drowned in the red Sea, and so covered with water, others from a great Gulf in the earth that is filled up, and covered with earth, injected into it; and others make it in the last place, an allusive expression to the mercy-seat, over which was a covering.

Sic velantur, ut in judicio non revelentur.

Now all these Metaphors in the general, tend to shew this, that the Lord will not look, he will not see,

ſee, he will not take notice of the ſins he hath pardoned to call them any more to a judicial account.

As when a Prince reads over many treaſons, and rebellions, and meets with ſuch and ſuch which he hath pardoned, he reads on, he paſſeth by, he taketh no notice of them, the pardoned perſon ſhall never hear more of them, he will never call him to account for thoſe ſins more. So here, *&c.* When *Ceſar* was painted, he put his finger upon his ſcar, his wart. God puts his fingers upon all his peoples ſcars and warts, upon all their weakneſſes and infirmities, that nothing can be ſeen but what is fair and lovely; *Thou art all fair, my Love, and there is no ſpot in thee.* Cant. 4.7.

Sixthly, It beſt agrees to that expreſſion of not imputing of ſin. Pſal. 32. 2. *Bleſſed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whoſe ſpirit there is no guile.* So the Apoſtle in that *Rom.* 4. 6,7,8 Now

not

not to impute iniquity, is not to charge iniquity, not to set iniquity upon his score, who is blessed and pardoned, &c.

Seventhly, and lastly, It best agrees with that expression that you have in the 113. *Psalm*, and the 11, and 12. *Verses*, *For as the Heaven is high above the Earth, so great is his mercy towards them that fear him: as far as the East is from the West, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.* What a vast distance is there betwixt the East and West? of all visible latitudes, this is the greatest; and thus much for the third Argument. The

Fourth Argument, that prevail with me, to judge that Jesus Christ will not bring the sins of the Saints into the judgement of discussion and discovery in the Great day, is, because it seems unsuitable to three considerable things, for Jesus Christ to proclaim the infirmities and miscarriages of his people to all the world.

First, it seems to be unsuitable to the glory and solemnity of that day, which to the Saints will be a day of refreshing, a day of restitution, a day of redemption, a day of coronation, as hath been already proved; now how suitable to this great day of solemnity, the Proclamation of the Saints sins will be, I leave the Reader to judge.

Secondly, It seems unsuitable to all those near and dear relations, that Jesus Christ stands in towards his; he stands in the relation of a *Father*, *a Brother*, *a Head*, *a Husband*, *a Friend*, *an Advocate*: Now are not all these by the Law of relation, bound rather to hide, and keep secret (at least from the world) the weaknesses, and infirmities of their near and dear relations; and is not Christ, is not Christ much more? By how much he is more a *Father*, a *Brother*, a *Head*, a *Husband*, &c. in a spiritual way, than any others can be in a natural way, *&c.*

Isa. 9. 6. Heb. 2. 11, 12. Eph. 1. 21, 22. Rev. 19. 7. Joh. 15. 1. Joh. 2. 1, 2.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, It seems very unsuitable to what the Lord Jesus requires of his in this world; the Lord requires that his people should cast a Mantle of Love, of Wisdom, of silence, and secretie over one anothers weaknesses and infirmities.

Hatred stirreth up strifes, but love covereth all sins; Loves mantle is very large; Love will find a hand; a plaister to clap upon every sore. *Flavius Vespasianus*, (the Emperour) was very ready to conceal his friends Vices, and as ready to reveal their Vertues: So is Divine love in the hearts of the Saints; *If thy Brother offend thee, go and tell him his fault between him and thee alone; If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy Brother.* As the Pills of reprehension are to be gilded and sugar'd over with much gentleness and softness; so they are to be given in secret; tell him between him and thee alone, Tale-bearers, and Tale-hearers are alike abominable.

Pro. 10 12. 1 Pet. 4. 8.

Mat. 18. 15.

Heaven is too hot, and too holy a place for them, *Psal.* 15. 3. Now will Jesus Christ have us carry it thus towards offending Christians, and will he himself act otherwise? Nay, is it an evil in us to lay open the weaknesses and infirmities of the Saints to the World? and will it be an excellency, a glory, a vertue in Christ, to do it in the great day, *&c.*

A fifth Argument, is this, It is the glory of a man to pass over a Transgression, *The discretion of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to pass over a transgression*, or to pass by it, as we do by persons or things, we know not, or would take no notice of. Now, *is it the glory of a man to pass over a transgression*, and will it not much more be the glory of Christ, silently to pass over the transgressions of his people, in that great day? The greater the treasons and rebellions are, that a Prince passes over, and takes no notice of, the more is his Honour and Glory: and

Prov. 19. 11

Non amo quenquam nisi offendam, said a Heathen.

and so doubtless it will be Christs in that great day, to pass over all the Treasons and Rebellions of his people, to take no notice of them, to forget them as well as to forgive them.

The Heathens have long since observed, that in nothing man came neater to the Glory, and Perfection of God himself, than in Goodness and Clemency; Surely, if it be such an honour to man *to pass over a Transgression*, it cannot be a dishonour to Christ, to pass over the Transgressions, of his people, he having already buried them in the Sea of his blood. Again, saith *Solomon*, *It is the glory of God to conceal a thing.* And why it should not make for the Glory of Divine Love, to conceal the sins of the Saints, in that great Day, I know not: And whether the concealing the sins of the Saints in the great day, will not make most for their joy, and wicked mens sorrows, for their comfort, and wicked mens terrour Pro. 25. 2.

and torment, I will leave you to judge, and time and experience to decide; and thus much for the resolution of that great question. Having done with the Motives that may encourage and provoke young men to be good betimes, to know, love, seek and serve the Lord, in the spring and morning of their days.

CHAP. VI.

I Shall now come to those directions and helps, that must (by assistance from Heaven) be put in practice, if ever you would be good betimes, & serve the Lord in the Primrose of your days Now all that I shall say, will fall under these two heads.

First, *Some things you must carefully and warily decline, and arm your selves against.* And

Secondly, *There are other things that you must prosecute and follow.*

First, *There are some things that you must warily decline*, and they are these.

I. Di-

I. Direction.

First, *If ever you would be good betimes, if you would be gracious in the spring and morning of your youth, Oh! then take heed of putting the day of Death far from you.* Amos 6. 3.

Young Men are very prone to look upon death afar off, and put it at a great distance from them; they are apt to say to death, as *Pharaoh* said to *Moses*; *Get thee from me, and let me see thy face no more*; if old men discourse to them of Death, they are ready to answer as the high Priest did *Judas* (in a different case) *What is that to us? look you unto it:* we know sickness will come, and death is a debt that we must all pay, but surely these guests are a great way from us, for doth not *David* say, *The days of a man are threescore years and ten?* we have calculated our nativities, and we cannot abate a day, a minute, a moment of *threescore and ten*, and therefore it is even a death to us to think of death, there being so great a Exod 10. 28. Mat. 27. 4. Psalm 90. 10.

distance between our birth-day, and our dying-day, as we have cast up the account.

Ah Young Men! it is sad, it is very sad when you are so wistily wicked as to say with those in *Ezekiel*, *Behold, they of the house of* Israel *say, the Vision that he seeth is for many days to come, and he prophesieth of the times that are afar off.* Ezek 12. 27.

Ah! Young Men, Young Men, by putting far away this day, you gratifie Satan, you strengthen sin, you provoke the Lord, you make the work of Faith and Repentance more hard and difficult, you lay a sad Foundation for the greatest fears, and doubts.

Ah! How soon may that sad word be fulfilled upon you? *The Lord of that Servant, that saith his Lord delayeth his coming, shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder* (or cut him off) *and appoint him his portion with Hypocrites, there shall be weeping and gnashing of* Mat. 24. 48, 49, 50, 51.

teeth

teeth. When *Sodom*, when *Pharaoh*, when *Agag*, when *Amalek*, when *Haman*, when *Herod*, when *Nebuchadnezzar*, when *Belshazzar*, when *Dives*, when the fool in the Gospel, were all in their Prime, their Pride, when they were all in a flourishing state, and upon the very top of their Glory, how strangely, how suddenly, , how sadly, how fearfully, how wonderfully were they brought down to the Grave to Hell!

Ah Young Man! Who art thou? and what is thy Name, or Fame? what is thy power or Place? what is thy Dignity or Glory? that thou darest promise thy self an exemption from sharing in as sad a Portion as ever Justice gave to those who were once very high, who were seated among the Stars, but are now brought down to the sides of the Pit? I have read a Story of one, that gave a young Prodigal a Ring, with a Deaths Head on this condition, that he should one hour daily for seven

Isa 13. 10. to the 17. verse.

days together, look and think upon it, which bred a great change in his life.

Ah young men! the serious thoughts of death may do that for you, that neither friends, counsel, example, prayers, sermons, tears, have not done to this very day. Well, remember this, to labour not to dye is labour in vain, and to put this day far from you, and to live without fear of death is to dye living. Death seizeth on old men, and lays wait for the youngest. Death is oftentimes as near to the young mans back, as it is to the old mans face.

Seribus mors in januis, a dolescentibus in insidiis. Bern. De conuers. ad Cler. c. 14.

It is storied of *Charles* the fourth, King of *France*, that being one time affected with the sense of his many and great sins, he fetch'd a deep sigh, and said to his Wife, By the help of God, I will now so carry my self all my life long that I will never offend him more; which words he had no sooner uttered, but he fell down dead and died.

Do not young men put this day far from you, leſt you are ſuddenly ſurprized, and then you cry out (when too late) *a Kingdom for a Chriſt, a Kingdom for a Chriſt*; as once Croock-backt *Richard* the Third, in his diſtreſs, *a Kingdom for Horſe, a Kingdom for a Horſe.*

Ah Young men! did you never hear of a young man that cryed out; *Oh! I am ſo ſick, that I cannot live, and yet* (woful wretch that I am) *ſo ſinful that I dare not dye; Oh that I might live! Oh that I might dye! Oh that I might do neither!* Well, Young men, remember this, the frequent, the ſerious thoughts of death will prevent many a ſin, it will arm you againſt many temptations, it will ſecure you from many afflictions, it will keep you from doting on the world, it will make you do much in a little time, it will make death eaſie when it comes, and it will make you look out betimes for a Kingdom that ſhakes

1 Pet. 1. 13, 14. Eccleſ. 9. 10.

shakes not, for riches that corrupt not, and for glory that fadeth not away. Therefore do not, Oh! do not put the day of Death far from you. Take heed of crying *Cras, Cras*, to morrow, to morrow, saith *Luther*, for a man lives forty years before he knows himself to be a fool, and by that time he sees his folly, his life is finished; so men dye before they begin to live.

II. Direction.

Secondly, *If you would be good betimes, then take heed of leaning to your own understanding.*

Pro 3.1,5. Lean not, is a Metaphor from an old or sick man leaning on his staff, &c.

This Counsel wise *Solomon* gives to his Son (or the young men in his time) *My Son forget not my Law, but let thy heart keep my commandments: Trust in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not to thy own understanding.*

Youth is the age of folly, of vain hopes, and over-grown confidence! Ah how wise might many

many have been, had they not been too early wise in their own opinion.

Rehoboams Young Counsellors proved the overthrow of his Kingdom. 'Tis brave for youth, in all things to be discreet and sober-minded. Three vertues they say are private ornaments of Youth, Modesty, Silence, and Obedience.

Ah! Young men, keep close in every action to this one principle, *viz.* in every action resolve to be discreet and wise, rather than affectionate and singular.

I remember, that a young Gentleman of *Athens*, being to answer for his life, hired an Orator to make his Defence, and it pleased him well at his first reading; but when the young man, by often reading it, that he might recite it publickly by heart, begun to grow weary, and displeased with it, the Orator bid him consider that the

Judges

Judges and the people were to hear it but once; and then it was likely that they at the first instant might be as well pleased as he.

Ah! Young men, your leaning upon your selves, or upon others, will in the end be bitterness and vexation of spirit; Young men are very apt to lean on their own Wit, Wisom, Arts, Parts, as old men are to lean upon a staff to support them; (as the Hebrew Word signifies, that is rendred *Lean*, in that of *Prov.* 3. 5.) this hath been the bane of many a choice wit, the loss of many a brave head, the ruine of many a subtile pate.

שען *Shagnan.*

Ajax thought it was only for Cowards and weaklings to lean upon the Lord for succour, not for him, whence he was foiled. Lean not to great parts, lean not to natural or acquired accomplishments, lest you lose them and your selves too. Leaning to

natu-

natural or moral excellencies, is the ready way to be ſtript of all. *Babylon* that bore *her ſelf* bold upon her high Towers, thick walls, and twenty years proviſion laid in for a ſiege, was ſurprized by *Cyrus*.

'Twas ſaid of *Cæſar*, that he received not his wounds from the ſwords of enemies, but from the hands of friends, that is, from truſting in them.

Ah! How many young men have been wounded, yea, ſlain by truſting to their own underſtanding, their own abilities?

'Twas an excellent ſaying of S. *Auſtin* (*in te ſtas, & non ſtas*) he that ſtands upon his own ſtrength, ſhall never ſtand. A Creature, is like a ſingle drop, left to it ſelf, it ſpends and waſts it ſelf preſently; but if like a drop in the fountain and Ocean of being, it hath abundance of ſecurity.

Ah! Young men, young men, if you will needs be leaning, then lean upon pretious Promiſes

2 Pet. 1. 4. Pſal. 27. 1.

ſes lean upon the Rock that is higher than your ſelves, lean upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as *John* did who was the youngeſt of all the Diſciples, and the moſt beloved of all the Diſciples. *John* leaned much and Chriſt loved him much. Oh! lean upon Chriſts wiſdom for Direction, lean upon his Power for Protection, lean upon (his Purſe) his Fulneſs for Proviſion, lean upon his Eye for Approbation, lean upon his Righteouſneſs for Juſtification, lean upon his Blood for Remiſſion, lean upon his Merit for Salvation.

Joh. 21. 10.

Cant. 8. 5.

As the young Vine without her Wall to ſupport her, will fall and ſink: So will you, Young men, without Chriſt puts under his everlaſting arms to ſupport you, and uphold you; therefore above all leanings, lean upon him; by leaning on him, you will engage him; by leaning on him you will gain more honour than you can give, by leaning on him, you may even command him, and make *Him eternally yours.*

III. Di-

III. Direction.

Thirdly, *If you would be good betimes, if you would seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of your days, then take heed of flatterers and flattery.*

Ah! How many Young Men might have been very good, who are now exceeding bad, by hearkening to Flatterers, and affecting Flattery? Flattery undid young *Reboboam*, *Ahab*, *Herod*, *Nero*, *Alexander*, &c. Flatterers are soul-murderers, they are soul-undoers; they are like evil Chirurgions, that skin over the wound, but never heal it. 1 King. 12. and ch. 22. Act. 12. 22, 23, 24.

Anastasius the Emperours Motto was (*mellitum venenum blanda oratio*) smooth talk proves often sweet poyson. Flattery is the very spring and Mother of all impiety, it blows the Trumpet, and draws poor souls into Rebellion against God, as *Sheba* drew *Israel* to rebel against *David*; it put our first Parents

rents upon tasting the forbidden fruit; it put *Absalom* upon dethroning of his Father; it put *Haman* upon plotting the ruine of the *Jews*; it put *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, upon rebelling against *Moses*; it makes men call evil good, and good evil, darkness light, and light darkness, *&c.* it puts persons upon neglecting the means of Grace, upon undervaluing the means of Grace, and upon contemning the means of Grace; it puts men upon abasing God, slighting Christ, and vexing the Spirit; it unmans man, it makes him call black white, and white black; it makes a man change Pearls for Pebles, and Gold for Counters; it makes a man judge himself wise when he is foolish, knowing, when he is ignorant, Holy, when he is Prophane, Free, when he is a Prisoner, Rich, when he is Poor; High, when he is Low; Full, when he is Empty; Happy, when he is Miserable.

The Flatterers told *Dionysius*, that his spittle was as sweet as Honey Rev. 3 17, 18.

Ah!

Ah! Young men, and young women, take heed of flatterers, they are the very worst of sinners: they are left of God, blinded by Satan, hardned in sin, and ripened for Hell. God declares sadly against them, and that in his Word and in his Works; in his Word, as you may see by Comparing these Scriptures together, *Deut.* 29. 18, 19, 20. *Psal.* 78. 36. *Psal.* 36. 1, 2. *Job* 17. 5. *Ezekiel* 13. 24. *Dan.* 11. 21, 32, 34. *Psal.* 12. 2, 3. *They speak vanity every one with his neighbour, with flattering lips, and with a double heart do they speak. The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips; and the tongue that speaketh proud things:* And as God declares sadly against them in his Word, so he hath declared terribly against them in his Works, as you may run and read in his Judgments executed upon *Ahabs* flattering Prophets, and upon *Haman*, and upon *Daniel's* (Princely) false Accusers, &c. And why then will not you

Karah signifies any cutting off, either by death, or banishment, &c.

y·u ſtop your ears againſt thoſe wretches, that the hand and heart of God is ſo much againſt?

A Preacher in *Conſtantines* time, preſumed to call the Emperour Saint to his face; but he went away with a check. *Euſeb. de vit. Conſt. lib.* 44.

Again, as God declares againſt them, ſo good men deteſt them, and declare againſt them, as you may ſee by comparing theſe Scriptures together, *Pſalm* 5. 8, 9, 10. *Prov.* 2. 16. *Prov.* 7. 21. *Prov.* 28. 23. *Job* 32. 21, 22. 1 *Theſ.* 2. 5, 10. *Proverbs* 20. 19. *Meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips.* Why ſo, why? becauſe a man that flattereth his Neighbour, ſpreadeth a Net for his feet, *Proverbs* 29. 5. The Hebrew word (*Mahalick*, from *hhalak*) that is here rendered *Flatterer*, ſignifieth *Smooth-boots*, a ſoft butter ſpoken man, becauſe flatterers uſe ſmooth ſoft ſpeeches. Alſo the word ſignifies *to divide*, becauſe a flatterers tongue is divided from his heart. Flatterers have their Nets, and thoſe that give ear to them, will be taken to their ruine. A lying

tongue

ongue hateth those that are afflict-ed by it, *and a flattering mouth worketh ruine, Prov. 26. ult.* A flat-tering mouth, ruines name, fame, state, body, soul, life.

Valerian the *Roman* Emperour used to say (*Non acerba, sed blanda*, not bitter, but flattering words do all the mischief.

When *Alexander* the great, was hit with an Arrow in the siege of an *Indian* City, which would not heal, he said to his Parasites, *You say that I am* Jupiters *Son, but this wound cries, that I am but a man.*

Now shall good men detest them, and abhor them as they are the Pest of Pests, the Plague of Plagues; and will you own them, will you take pleasure in them, to your ruine here and hereafter? the Lord forbid. O say to all flatte-rers, as he to his Idols, *Get you hence, for what have I more to do with you?*

Nay, once more consider, that not

The Hebrew word דהה *Dabhah* signifies such a violent forceing of one as he cannot stand, it signifies to throw down, to drive on forwards till a man fall into destruction.

Hos. 14. 8.

not only the good, but the bad not only the best, but (some of the worst of men have manifested their detestation of Flatterers and Flattery.

Leo the Emperour used to say, (*Occulti inimici pessimi*) a close enemy is far worse than an open. When a Court-Parasite praised *Segismund* the Emperour above measure, the Emperour gave him a sound box on the ear.

When *Aristobulus* the Historian presented to *Alexander* the Great a Book that he had written of his glorious acts, wherein he had flatteringly made him greater than he was; *Alexander* (after he had read the Book) threw it into the River *Hydaspes*, and said to the Author, it were a good deed to throw thee after it.

When the Flatterers flattered *Antigonus*, he cryed out (*mentiris, mentiris in gutture, Hæ virtutes non latent in me*) thou lyest, thou lyest in thy throat, these vertues

that thou ſpeakeſt of, I have in me; but I am like a Leopard, hath ten black ſpots to one white.

Auguſtus Cæſar, and *Tiberius Cæſar*, were deadly enemies to flatterers, inſomuch that they would not be called Lords by their own children.

A good Symbol is attributed to *Trebonianus Gallus*, *viz.* (*Nemo amicus idem & adulator*) no flatterer can be a true friend.

Ariſtippus (the Philoſopher) ſeeing *Diogenes* waſhing of Herbs for his Dinner, ſaid, If *Diogenes* knew how to make uſe of Kings, he need not live upon raw Herbs, as he doth; to which *Diogenes* replied, that if *Ariſtippus* could content himſelf with Herbs, he need not to turn Spaniel, or to flatter King *Dionyſius* for a meals meat.

Ah! Young men, young men, will God, ſhall good men, ſhall wiſe men deteſt and declare againſt flatterers and Flattery, and will not

not you turn a deaf ear upon them, yea, fly from them, as from a Serpent, and shun them, as you would shun Hell it self? If you do not, the very Heathens but now cited, w l rise in judgement against you.

Flatterers are the very worst of Sinners. The Flatterers told *Cæsar*, that his Freckles in his face, were like the Stars in the Firmament; they bought and sold *Aurelius* the Emperour at pleasure. And *Augustus* complained, when *Varrus* was dead, that he had none now left, that would deal plainly and faithfully with him.

So men may gain by flattery, they will be like *Harpalus*, who said, (*Quod Regi placet, mihi placet*) that which pleaseth the King, pleaseth me, when *Astyages* set his own Son before him to feed upon him.

O but let every young man say, (into whose hands this Treatise shall fall) *Quod deo placet, mihi placet*)

) that which pleaseth God, pleaseth me.

I have been the longer upon this, out of love to young mens Souls, who are so apt to be insnared in the Flatterers Net; if ever you would be good in good earnest, you must abhor Flatterers, as the first-born of the Devil, and as such as are most pernicious to mens happiness both here and hereafter.

Whilest an *Ass* is stroaked under the belly, you may lay on his back what burthen you please

It is reported of one *Oramazes*, that he had an enchanted Egg, in which (as he boasted himself) he had enclosed all the happiness of the World, but being broken, nothing was found in it but wind. *Flatterers are the greatest Cheaters, the greatest Deceivers in the World.*

They say of the *Crocodile*, that when he hath killed a man, he will weep over him, as if he were sorry, and did repent for what he had done; the Application is easie.

IV. Direction.

Fourthly, *If you would be good betimes, if you would seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of your days, then take heed of engaged affections to the things of the world.*

Mar. 19. 16.--24.

The young man in the Gospel took many a step toward Heaven: *All these things have I kept from my youth up, what lack I yet?* Christ makes a very fair offer to him in the next words, *Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven, and come and follow me:* thou shalt have Heaven for Earth, a Sea for a Drop, a Treasure for a Mite, a Crown for a Crum. But the young mans affections were strongly engaged to the things of the world; and therefore he turns his back upon Christ, and goes away sorrowful because he had great possessions. Oh! the madness, the folly of this young man,

Multi amando res noxias sunt miseri, habendo miseriores, Aug. in Psal. 26.

man, who to enjoy a little temporal felicity, hath bid an everlasting farewel to Christ and Glory; in that of *Gen.* 13. 2. it is said that *Abraham* was very rich in Cattle, in Silver, and in Gold; the Hebrew word (*Cabeth*) that is here rendred *Rich*, signifies, heavy, it signifies a burthen, to show us, that riches are a heavy burthen; and an hinderance many times to Heaven and Happiness; and this young man in the Gospel found it so to his eternal undoing. Though the Load-stone cannot draw the Iron when the Diamond is in presence, yet earthly possessions did draw this young mans Soul away, when Christ the Pearl of price was present; the World is a silken Net, and this young man found it so; the World is like golden Fetters, and this young man found it so; the World is like sweet poyson, and this young man found it so; for he had drunk so large a draught of it, that there was no room in his

They are *dulce venenum*, a sweet poyson. *Bern.*

soul for Christ or Heaven, for Grace or Glory. Some say, that when the Serpent *Scytale* cannot overtake the flying Passengers, she doth with her beautiful colours, so astonish and amaze them, that they have no power to pass away till she have stung them: such a Serpent the world proved to the young man in the Gospel, it did so affect him and take him, so amaze him, and amuse him, that he could not stir till it stung him to death.

When the Moon is fullest, it is furthest from the Sun; so the more men have of the World, the further (commonly) they are from God; and this the young man in the Gospel made good.

Many have ventured life and limb, and many a better thing, to gain the things of this world, and yet after all, they have got nothing at all. *Achan*'s golden Wedge, proved a Wedge to cleave him; and his Garment, a Garment to shrowd him.

The whole world is circular, the heart

If money were thrown to the Dogs, they would not so much as smell at it; the greater is their folly and madness, that will go to Hell gates for

heart of a man is triangular, and we know a circle cannot fill a triangle; yea, if it be not filled with the three Persons in Trinity, it will be filled with the World, the Flesh and the Devil. The World may be resembled to the Fruit that undid us all, which was fair to the sight, smooth in handling, sweet in taste, but deadly in effect and operation.

Ah! Young Men, Young Men; have none of you found it so?

The World in all its bravery, is no better than the Cities which *Solomon* gave to *Hiram*, which he called *Cabul*, that is to say, displeasing——or dirty; the world will afford nothing but trivial Flowers, surrounded with many Bryers: O the vanity! the uncertainty! the imperfection of all things below! if a man should weigh his pay and his pains together, his miseries and his pleasures together, his joys, and his sorrow together, his mer-

1 King. 9 13

cies, and his crosses together, his good days, and his bad days together, will he not conclude vanity of vanity, and all is vanity?

In my other Treatises, you may read more of the vanity, insufficiency, impotency, mutability, uncertainty, and inconstancy of the World, and to them I refer you.

It was a wise and Christian Speech of *Charles* the Fifth, to the Duke of *Venice*, who when he had shewed him the glory of his Princely Palace, and earthly Paradise, instead of admiring it, or him for it, only returned him this grave and serious *memento*, (*Hæc sunt quæ faciunt invitos mori*) these are the things which make us unwilling to dye; it was a good saying of one to a great Lord (upon his shewing him his stately House, and pleasant Gardens;) Sir, you had need make sure of Heaven, or else when you dye, you will be a very great loser.

Ah! Young men, Young men, 'tis only Heaven that is above all winds, storms, and tempests, nor hath God cast man out of Paradise, for

for him to think to find out another Paradise in this world, the main reason, why many young men dote upon the world, is, because they are not acquainted with a greater Glory: Men are Adorns, till they were acquainted with the use of Wheat. The woman had the moon under her feet, when she was cloathed with the Sun, and had a Crown of twelve Stars upon her head. Rev. 12. 1.

And Young men, were you but Cloathed with the Son of Righteousness, and had you a Crown set upon your heads, by the hand of Faith, you would have all the things of this World, which are as low, bespotted, and inconstable as the Moon, under your feet; well young men, as ever you would be good betimes, sit loose from the things of this world, be no longer worshippers of this golden Calf, and never let the world, that should be but your servant, become your Lord; Oh let not the Devil and the World, Heb. 11. 24, 25, 26, 27, 35. ch. 10. 34.

have more service for an ounce of Gold, than Christ shall have for the Kingdom of Heaven!

Ah young men! the world and you must part, or Christ and you will never meet, *You cannot serve God and Mammon.* The two Poles shall sooner meet than the love of Christ, and the love of the World.

Mat. 6. 24

V. Direction.

Fifthly, *If you would be good betimes, if you would know, seek, and serve the Lord in the Spring and morning of your youth, then take heed betimes of carnal Reason, take heed of consulting with flesh and blood.*

Gal. 1. 15, 16

Many a hopeful young man hath been undone temporally, and undone eternally, by hearkning to those evil Counsellors.

Carnal Reason is an enemy, yea, an utter enemy, nay, it is not only an utter enemy, but it is enmity, yea, enmities, *Rom.* 8 7. An enemy may be reconciled, but enmity can never

Cicero a Heathen, could say that man would not be so wicked, and do so wickedly, were it not for his reason.

ver be reconciled. Carnal Reason is not only averse, but it is utterly averse to all goodness, it builds strong holds and syllogisms against the most glorious Gospel truths, and accounts the precious things of Christ as a strange thing; carnal reason will make God and Gospel do homage to it; when carnal Reason is in the Throne, Christ and his truths must all bow, or be judged before its Bar.

Ah! Young men, young men, as ever you would be good betimes, stop your ears against all carnal Reasonings within you; carnal Reason judges the choicest things of the Gospel to be meer foolishness, it is pur-blind, and cannot see how to make a right judgment of Christ, his Word, his ways, and yet will control all. 1 Cor. 1. 2.

If you are resolved to be still Scholars to this Master, then you must resolve to be unhappy here, and miserable hereafter. But

It is safer and better for you to imitate those young men, who in the morning of their days have graciously, wisely, and resolutely withstood those evil Counsellors, Carnal Reason, Flesh and Blood; *Joseph* & *Moses*, *Daniel*, *Shadrach*, *Meshech*, and *Abednego*, all these in the Primrose of their youth, were good at turning the deaf ear to carnal Counsel, and carnal Counsellors.

Gen. 39. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, &c. Heb. 11. 24, 25, 26. Dan. 1.

Cassianus reports of a young man that had given himself up to a Christian life, and his Parents misliking that way, they wrote letters to him to perswade him from it; and when he knew there were letters come from them, he would not open them, but threw them into the fire, this example is worth following.

Another famous Example you have in the story of King *Edward* the sixth, when *Cranmer* and *Ridley* came to him, and were very earnest to have him give way to his Sister, the Lady *Mary*, to have

have Mass; he stood out, and pleaded the case with them, that it was a sin against God, and provoking to the eyes of his Glory, &c. but they still continued to use many Carnal Arguments to perswade the King (who was but a Child about fifteen years of age) but he withstood them a great while; but at length, when he saw he could not prevail (with all his pleading) against those grave men, but that they still continued their suit, he burst out into bitter weeping, and sobbing, desiring them to desist; the Motioners seeing his zeal and constancy, wept as fast as he, and being overcome, they went away, and told one that the King had more Divinity in his little finger, than they had in all their bodies.

Ah! young men, it will be your safety, and your glory, to write after this Princely Copy, when you are surrounded with carnal reason and carnal Counsellors, &c.

VI. Di-

VI. Direction.

Joh. 9. 39, 40.

Sixthly and Lastly, *If you would be good betimes, then take heed of comparing your selves with those that are worse than your selves.*

Young men are very apt to compare themselves with those that are worse than themselves, and this proves a snare unto them, yea, oftentimes their bane, their ruine. As it did the young Pharisee in the Gospel, who pleaded his negative Righteousness: he was not as other men are, Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers; and stood on his comparative Goodness, not as this Publican; he stands not only upon his Comparisons, but upon his Disparisons; being blind at home, and too quick-sighted abroad, he contemneth, and condemneth the poor publican, who was better than himself, making good that saying of Seneca, the nature of man (saith he) is very apt (*animus perspicillis magis quam speculis*) to use Spectacles to behold

Luke 18. 11, 12, 13, 14.

Thales, one of the seven Sages, being asked what was the easiest thing in the world to do: answered, to know other mens faults, and none of our own.

hold other mens faults, rather than Looking-Glasses to behold our own; such Pharisees do justly incur the censure which that sowre Philosopher past upon Grammarians, *That they were better acquainted with the evils of* Ulysses, *than with their own.* *Diogenes apud Laertium.lib. 6.*

Ah! Young men, young men, you know he that drinks poison, though he drinks not so much as another; and he that commits Treason, though not so great, so high Treason as another, shall yet as certainly be poisoned, and hanged, as he that hath drunk a greater quantity of poison, and committed higher acts of Treason. Mat.11. 22,23,24, 25. As in Heaven one is more Glorious than another, so in Hell one shall be more miserable than another. *Aug.*

Sirs, do not delude, and befool your own souls, if you are not as wicked as others, you shall not be as much tormented as others, but yet you shall be as certainly damned as others, you shall as certainly go to Hell as others, you shall as sure be shut out for ever from God, Christ, Saints, Angels, and all the Treasures, Plea-

pleasures and glories of Heaven as others, except it be prevented by timely repentance on your side, and pardoning mercy on Gods.

Wilt thou count it madness, O young man! in him that is sick to reason thus; I am not so sick as such and such, and therefore will not send to the Physitian And in the wounded man to say, I am not so desperately wounded as such and such, and therefore I will not send to the Chirurgeon? and in the Traitor to say, I am not guilty of so many foul and hainous treasons as such and such, and therefore I will not look after a Pardon? and in the necessitous man, to say, I am not so hard put to it as such and such, and therefore I will not welcom a hand of Charity? and wilt not thou count it the greatest madness in the world, for thee to put off thy Repentance, and thy returning to the Lord in the spring and morning of thy youth, because that thou art not as sinful

as wicked as such and such? if to have a softer bed, a milder punishment in Hell than others, will satisfie thee, then go on; but if thou art afraid of the worm that never dyes, and of the fire that never goes out; but like that stone in *Arcadia*, which being once kindled could not be quenched; O then begin to be good betimes! O seek and serve the Lord in the Spring and Morning of your days.

To think often of Hell, is the way to be preserved from falling into Hell. Ah! young men, young men, that you would often consider the bitterness of the Damneds Torments and of the pitilessness of their Torments, and of the diversity of their Torments, and of the easelessness of their Torments, and of the remedilessness of their Torments, (*Momentaneum est quod delectat, Æternum quod cruciat.*) The Sinners delight here is momentany, that which torments hereafter is perpetual; when as Sinners

Chrysost. Hom 44. in Mat.

Sinner is in Hell, doſt thou think, O young man! that another Chriſt ſhall be found to dye for him, or that the ſame Chriſt will be Crucified again for him, or that another Goſpel ſhould be preached to him? Surely no.

Ah! Why then wilt thou not betimes return and ſeek out after the things that belong to thy everlaſting peace? I have read of Pope *Clement* the fifth, that when a young Nephew of his dyed, he ſent his Chaplain to a Necromancer, to know of him how it fared with him in the other world; the Conjurer ſhewed him to the Chaplain, lying in a fiery bed in Hell, which when the Pope underſtood, he never joyed more, &c.

Jac. Rev. Hiſt. Pont. Rom. 119.

Ah Young Man, that theſe occaſional hints of Hell, may be a means to preſerve thee from lying in thoſe everlaſting flames.

Bellarmine tells us of a certain Advocate of the Court of *Rome*, that

being at the point of death, stirred up by them that stood by to repent, and call upon God for Mercy, he with a constant countenance, and without sign of fear, turned his speech to God and said, *Lord, I have a desire to speak unto thee, not for my self, but for my Wife and Children, for I am hastening to Hell, neither is there any thing that thou shouldst do for me.* And this he spake, saith *Bellarmine*, (who was present and heard it) as if he had spoken of a journey to some Village or Town, and was no more affrighted.

Bellar. de Arte moriendi, l. 2. c. 10.

Sir *Francis Bacon* also in his History of *Henry* the seventh, relates how it was a common by-word of the Lord *Cardes*, *That he would be content to lie seven years in Hell, so he might win* Calis *from the* English. But if thou, O young man, art given up to such desperate Atheism, and carnal Apprehensions of Hell, I am afraid God will confute thee one day by Fire and Brimstone; but I would willingly hope

hope better things of all young persons, unto whose this Treatise shall fall. And thus see what things must be decli and avoided; if ever you wou good betimes, if ever you wo seek and serve the Lord in Spring and Morning of your

CHAP. VII.

But in the second place, *things must be declined, so things must carefully and diligently be practised, if ever you would be good betimes.* I shall instance only those that are most considerable and weighty: As,

First, *If ever you would be good betimes, &c. then you must labour to be acquainted with four things betimes.*

1. Duty.

First, *You must labour to acquaint your selves with the Scriptures betimes,* you must study the Word betimes; *David* studied the Word

he morning of his days, in the
-rose of his youth, and this
le him wiser than his enemies
, than his teachers; this made
as much excel the Ancients, as
Sun excels the Moon, or as the
oon excels the twinkling Stars.
othy was good betimes, and no
onder; for in the Prim-rose of
is days, he was acquainted
ith the Scripture, he was inu-
d to the Word from his child-
od, yea, from his infancy,
the Word properly signifies;
in that 119. *Psalm* the 9. *verse*,
herewithal shall a young man
anse his way? by taking heed
ording to thy Word. There is no
y to a holy heart, and a clean
, but by acquainting of your
ves with the Word betimes.
One hath long since observed,
hat God hath bowed down the
riptures to the capacity even
Babes and Sucklings, that
excuse may be taken away,
that Young Men may
encouraged to study the
Scri-

Psal. 119. 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103.

2 Tim. 3. 15.

ἀπὸ Βρέφους from a Suckling.

Aug.

Hier. Epist. Adoro Plenitudinem Scripturarum. Tert.

Scripture betimes. Ah! Young men, no Histories are compar'd to the Histories of the Scripture. 1. For Antiquity. 2. Rarity. 3. Variety. 4. Brevity. 5. Perspicuity. 6. Harmony. 7. Verity. All other Books cannot equal Gods, either in Age, or Authority, in Dignity, or Excellency, in Sufficiency or Glory.

Moses is found more ancient and more honourable than all those whom the *Grecians* make most ancient and honourable, as *Homer*, *Hesiod*, and *Jupiter* himself, whom the *Greeks* have seated in the top of their Divinity.

Gregory calls the Scripture (*Cor & animam Dei*) the heart and soul of God.

The whole Scripture is but one entire Love-letter, dispatcht from the Lord Christ to His Below Spouse, and who then but would still be a reading in this Love-letter? Like *Cæcilia* a *Roman* Maid of Noble Parentage, who carried always about her the New Testament, that she might still

reading in Christs Love-Letter, behold the sweet workings of Love, and heart, towards his dear and precious ones.

Luther found so much sweetness the Word, in Christs Love-Letter, that made him say, he would not live in Paradise if he might, without the Word (*at cum verbo iam in inferno facile est vivere*) but with the Word he could live in Hell it self.

The Word is like the stone *Gamonites*, that hath drops of Gold in it self, enriching of the believing soul. This the Martyrs found which made them willing to give a load of Hay, for a few leaves of the Bible in *English*.

Hier. Epist. ad Heliod. in Epitaph. Nepotiani.

St. *Augustine* professeth that the sacred Scriptures were his whole delight.

And St. *Hierom* tells (us) of one *Nepotianus*, who by long and assiduous Meditation on the Holy Scriptures, had made his breast the Library of Jesus Christ.

And

And *Rabbi Chiia* in the *Jerusa* *Talmud* saith, That in his accou all the world is not of equal val with one word out of the La That which a Papist reports ly ingly of their Sacrament of th Mass, *viz.* that there are as ma mysteries in it, as there be drops the Sea, dust on the Earth, Ang in Heaven, Stars in the Sky, Ato in the Sun beams, or Sands on th Sea shore, *&c.* may be truly asse ted of the Holy Scriptures.

Oh the Mysteries, the Exce lencies, the Glories, that are in th Word! Ah! no book to this boo none so useful, none so needful, none so delightful, none so, ne cessary to make you happy, an to keep you happy, as this. It said of *Cæsar*, (*major fuit cura Cæ sari libellorum, quam purpuræ*) th he had greater care of his Books than of his Royal Robes; fo swimming thorow the waters escape his enemies, he carri his Books in his hand above the

but lost his Robes; now
are Cæsars Books to Gods
Ah! Young men, young men,
Word of the Lord is a light
guide you, a Counsellor to
sel you, a comforter to com-
you; a Staff, to support you;
word, to defend you; and a
sician, to cure you; the Word
Mine, to inrich you; a Robe, to
ath you, and a Crown to Crown
it is Bread, to strengthen you;
Wine, to chear you; and a Ho-
comb, to feast you; and Musick
delight you; and a Paradise, to
tain you.

Psal. 119.

Oh! therefore before all, and
re all, search the Scripture,
the Scripture; dwell on the
ipture, delight in the Scri-
re, treasure up the Scripture;
Wisdom, to Scripture Wis-
; no Knowledge, to Scri-
e Knowledge; no Experience,
ipture Experience; no Com-
, to Scripture Comforts; no

The Jewish Rabbins were wont to say, that upon every letter of the Law, there hang Mountains of profitable matter.

De-

Delights to Scripture delights, and convictions to Scripture convictions, nor no conversion to Scripture conversion.

Tolle & Lege.

St. *Augustine* hearing a voice from Heaven, that bade him take and *Read*, whereupon turning open the New Testament, he fell upon that place, *Let us walk honestly as in the day, not in Rioting and Drunkenness, not in Chambering and Wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the Flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.* This Scripture so sunk into his heart, as that it proved the means of his conversion, as himself reports. This St. *Augustine*, as he was once preaching, his memory failing of him, contrary to his purpose, he fell upon reproving the *Manicheans*, and by a Scripture or two, not before thought of, to confute their Heresies, he converted *Firmus* a *Manichean*, as he after acknowledged to *Augustine*, blessing God for that Sermon.

Rom. 13. 13, 14.

Lib. 8. Confess. c. 11. Possidon. de vita Aug.

It is reported of one *Adrianus*, who seeing the Martyrs suffer such grievous things in the Cause of God, he asked, what was that which caused them to suffer such things? And one of them named that Text, *Eye hath not, nor ear heard, neither hath it entred into the heart of man, to conceive the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* And this Text was set home with such a power upon him, as that it converted him, and made him to profess Religion, and not only to profess it, but to die a Martyr for it. 1 Cor. 2. 9

Cyprian was converted by reading the Prophesie of *Jonah*. *Junius* was converted by reading the first Chapter of *John* the Evangelist.

I have read of a scandalous Minister that was struck at the heart and converted in reading that Scripture, *Thou which teachest another, teachest thou not thy self?* &c. Rom. 2. 21

We read, that *Paphnutius* converted *Thais* and *Ephron*, two famous

mous Strumpets from uncleanness, only with this Scripture Argument. *That God seeth all things in the dark, when the doors are fast, the windows shut, the curtains drawn.*

Heb. 4.13

I have read of a Poor man, who perswaded a young Scholar to leave reading of Poetry, &c. and fall upon reading of the Scripture, which accordingly he did; and it pleased the Lord, before he had read out *Genesis*, to change his heart, and to turn him to the Lord in the Primrose of his days, he being then but twenty years of age.

Origen was her Schoolmaster.

I have read of a young Lady, called *Potamia*, of a very Illustrious Family, who endured very much in her Martyrdom, by the extream cruelty of *Basilides* her Executioner; yet after her death, he bethinking himself of the Holy words, and Scripture expressions that were uttered by her during her cruel Torments, became a Christian, and within few

few dayes after, was himself likewise crowned with Martyrdom.

James Andreas, a Godly Minister, hearing of a *Jew*, that for Theft was hanged by the heels, with his head downward, having not seen that kind of punishment, he went to the place where he was hanging between two Doggs that were always snatching at him to eat his flesh; the poor wretch repeated in Hebrew some verses of the *Psalms*, wherein he cryed to God for mercy; Whereupon *Andreas* went near to him, and instructed him in the Principles of Christian Religion, about Christ the *Messiah*, &c. exhorting him to believe in him, and it pleased God so to bless his Scripture exhortations to him, that the Doggs gave over tearing of his flesh, and the poor *Jew* desired him to procure, that he might be taken down and Baptized, and hung by the neck for the quicker dispatch,

A Miracle of Mercy.

patch, which was done accordingly.

I might produce other Instances, but let these suffice to provoke all young persons to a speedy, serious, diligent, and constant study of the Scripture. Ah Sirs! you do not know how soon your blind minds may be enlightned, your hard hearts softned, and your proud spirits humbled, your sinful Natures charged, your defiled Consciences purged, your distempered affections regulated, and your poor Souls saved, by searching into the Scripture, by reading the Scripture, and by pondering upon the Scripture; you should lay up the Manna of God's Word in your hearts, as *Moses* laid up the Manna in the Golden pot. And as *Tamar* did with the Staff and the Signet that she received from *Judah*, she laid them up till she came to save her life, and did save her life by it, as you may see in holy story.

Much in the Word is wrapp'd up in a little. It is more to be admired, than to have *Homer*'s Iliads comprized in a Nutshel. Heb. 9. 4.

Gen. 38. 18, 36

The

The laying up the Word *Now*, may be the saving of your souls another day.

I have read of little Bees, that when they go out in stormy weather, they will carry a little of their comb or gravel with them, that they may be ballanced, and not carried away with the Wind.

Ah! Young Men, Young Men, you had need to have your thoughts and hearts ballanced with the pretious Word, that you may not be carried away with every wind of Doctrine, as many have been in these days, to their Destruction and Confusion.

Narcissus, a beautiful youth, though he would not love them that loved him, yet afterwards fell in love with his own shadow: Ah! How many young men in these days, who were once lovely, and hopeful, are now fallen in love with their own and others shadows, with high, empty, airy Notions, and with strange, monstrous speculations, to their own damnation? 2 Thes. 2. 10, 11, 12.

Holy *Melanchon*, being newly converted, thought it impossible for his Hearers to withstand the evidence of the Gospel, but soon after he complained that old *Adam* was too hard for young *Melanchon*.

Ah! Young men, young men, if you do not in good earnest give up your selves to the reading, to the studying, to the pondering, to the believing, to the affecting, to the applying, and to the living up to the Scripture, Satan will be too hard for you, the World will be too hard for you, your Lusts will be too hard for you, Temptations will be too hard for you, and Deceivers will be too hard for you, and in the end, you will be miserable; and thus much for the first thing, &c.

2. Duty.

Secondly, *If you would be good betimes, then you must acquaint*

you

your selves with your selves betimes. If you would be gracious in the Spring and Morning of your days, then you must see betimes how bad you are, how vile, how sinful, how wretched you are; no man begins to be good, till he sees himself to be bad; the young Prodigal never began to amend, he never thought of returning to his Father, till he came to himself, till he began to return to his own Soul, and saw himself in an undone Condition. Luke 15. 21, 22.

Ah! Young men, young men, you must see your selves, *To be Children of Wrath, to be Enemies, to be Strangers, to be afar off from God, from Christ, from the Covenant, from Heaven, to be Sins Servants, and Satans Bond-slaves*; the ready way to be found is to see your selves lost; the first step to mercy, is to see your misery; the first step towards *Heaven*, is to see your selves near to *Hell*, you will not look af- Eph. 2. 1, 2, 3, 12, 13. Rom. 6. 16. Joh. 8. 44. 2 Tim. 2. 26.

after the Physitian of Souls, you will not prize the Physitian of Souls, you will not desire the Physitian of Souls, you will not match with the Physitian of Souls, you will not fall in love, in league with the Physitian of Souls, you will not resign up your selves to the Physitian of Souls, till you come to see your Wounds, till you come to feel your Diseases, till you see the Tokens, the Plague-sores of Divine Wrath and Displeasure upon you; as the whole do not need the Physitian, so they do not desire, they do not care for the Physitian.

Austin saith, he would willingly go thorow Hell to Christ; so will all that see their need of Christ.

Ah! Young Men, as you would be good betimes, begin to acquaint your selves with your sinful selves betimes, begin to acquaint your selves betimes with your Natural and undone Condition.

Zanchy writ a Treatate, *Quod nihil situr.*

There is a three-fold self.

1. There is a natural Self, as a mans Parts, Wit, Reason, Will, Affe-

Affections, and Inclinations, &c.

2. A Religious Self, and so a Mans Duties, Graces, Obedience, Righteousness, Holiness, are called ones self.

3. There is a sinful self, and so a Mans Corruptions, Lusts, Sinful Nature and Dispositions, are called ones Self, now if ever you would be good betimes, you must acquaint your selves with your sinful self betimes.

Luther said, that if a man could perfectly see his own faults, the sight thereof would be a very Hell unto him.

Demonicus being asked at what time he began to be a Philosopher: Answered, *When I began to know my self.* So a man never begins to be a Christian, till he begins to know himself. And indeed for a man to know himself, to acquaint himself with himself, is one of the hardest works in all the World. For as the eye can see all things but it self, so most can discern all faults but their own. *Henry* the fourth, Emperour of *Germany*, his usual speech was, *Multi multa*

sciunt, se autem nemo, many know much, but few know themselves.

The very Heathens did admire that saying as an Oracle, (*nosce te ipsum*) know, and be acquainted with thy own self. The main exhortation of *Chilo*, one of the seven Sages, was, Know thy self. And *Plato* recordeth, that this saying of *Chilo*, Know thy self, was written in Letters of Gold upon the Portal of *Apollo*'s Temple.

Juvenal saith, that this saying Know thy self, came from Heaven. *Macrobius* saith, That the Oracle of *Apollo* being demanded what course should be taken for attaining to Felicity, answered, Only teach a man to know himself.

Thus you see, that both Divinity and Philosophy doth agree in this, that the best and surest way to true felicity, is to know our selves, to acquaint our selves with our selves.

This

This Duty the Apostle charges upon the *Ephesians*, *Remember that you being in times past Gentiles in the flesh, that at that time you were without Christ, aliens from the Commonwealth of* Israel, *and strangers from the Covenant of Promise, having no hope, and without God in the World.* Here are five withouts, *without Christ, without the Church, without the Promise, without Hope, and without God in the World.*

Eph. 2. 11 12. Of dull and insensible men, one long since, thus complained (*patientius ferre Christi jacturam, quam suam*) that they did more calmly pass by the injuries done to Christ, than those that were done unto themselves. O the Plague of unsensibleness.

Man in his Natural state is afar off, (he is without) three manner of ways.

1. In point of opinion and apprehension.

2. In point of Fellowship and Communion.

3. In point of Grace and Conversion.

As you would be good betimes, dwell much upon your corrupt nature betimes. Ah! such is the corruption of our Nature, that propound any divine good to it, it is entertained as fire by water, or wet

wet wood with hissing; propound any evil, then it is like fire to straw, it is like the foolish Satyr, that made haste to kiss the fire; it is like that unctuous matter, which the Naturalists say, sucks, and snatches the fire to it, with which it is consumed: till you come to be sensible of this, you will never begin to be good, you will never look to have your hearts changed, and your souls saved.

The *Æthiopians* paint Angels black, and Devils white, in favour of their own Complexion, and they say, that if the bruit Creatures could draw a Picture of the Divine Nature, they would make their shape the Copy; and thus they flatter and delude themselves; take heed young men, take heed that you do not put the like cheats upon your own souls; take heed that you be not like those Limners, who so as they can make a mans Picture gay and gaudy, care not to draw it so as

to

to resemble him. It is safest and best O young man! to know the worst of thy self, and to know thy self as thou art in thy self, and not as thy own flattering heart, or as other flatterers may represent thee to thy self.

3. Duty.

Thirdly, If you would be good betimes, then *you must acquaint your selves with Jesus Christ betimes.*

You must know him betimes; A man never begins to be good, till he begins to know him that is the fountain of all goodness; *This is Life eternal to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.* Joh. 17. 3.

The knowledge of Christ, is the beginning of eternal life, it is the way to eternal life, it is a taste of eternal life, it is a sure pledge and pawn to the soul of eternal life.

The *Spaniards* say of *Aquinas*, that he that knows not him, knows not any thing; but he that

that knows him, knows all things; he that knows Jesus Christ, not notionally only, but practically; not apprehensively only, but effectively; he knows all things that may make him happy: but he that knows not Jesus Christ, knows nothing that will stand him in stead when he shall lie upon a dying Bed, and stand before a Judgement Seat.

Justin Martyr relates, that when in his dis-course with *Tryphon*, he mentioned the Knowledge of Christ, as conducing to our happiness and perfection, *Tryphon*'s friends laughed at it; but I hope better things of those, into whose hands this Treatise shall fall.

Sirs, The Sun is not more necessary to the World, the Eye to the Body, the Pilot to the Ship, the General to the Army, *&c.* than the knowledge of Christ betimes, is necessary for all those that would be good betimes.

Dear hearts, as ever you would be good betimes, *you must labour*

ever

ven as for life, *to know, and be thoroughly acquainted with these six things*, concerning Jesus Christ betimes.

First, If you would be good betimes, *Then you must know betimes, that there is every thing in Christ, that may encourage you to seek him, and serve him, to love him, and obey him, to believe on him, and to marry with him.*

Nec Christus, nec Cœlum patitur hyperbolem.

If you look upon his Names, his Natures, his Offices, his Graces, his Dignities, his Excellencies, his Royalties, his Glories, his Fulnesses, they all speak out as much.

Are you poor? Why, Christ hath tried Gold to enrich you. Are you naked? Christ hath white Rayment to cloath you. Are you spiritually blind? Christ hath Eye-salve to enlighten you. Are you in straits? he hath wisdom to counsel you. Are you unrighteous? he will be righteousness to you. Are you unholy? he will be holiness and sanctification to you; are you hungry?

Rev 3. 18.

1 Cor. 1. 30.

gry? he is bread to feed you. Are you thirsty? he is Wine and Milk to satisfie you. Are you weary? he is a Bed, a Seat to rest you. Are you sick? why, he is a Physician to cure you, &c. (*Omne bonum in summo bono*) all good is in the chiefest good.

Joh. 6. 48. Isa. 55. 1. Mat. 11. 28 Mat. 9. 12.

The creatures have their particular goodness, health hath its particular goodness, and wealth hath its particular goodness, and learning hath its, and the favour of the Creature hath its, &c. But now Jesus Christ he is an Universal good; all the petty excellencies that are scattered abroad in the Creatures, are united to Christ; yea, all the whole Volume of perfection which is spread through Heaven and Earth is Epitomized in him. *Ipse unus erit tibi omnia, quia in ipso tuo bono, bona sunt omnia, Aug.* One Christ will be to thee in stead of all things else, because in him are all good things to be found. *Abraham's* Servant brought forth Jewels of Silver, and Jewels of Gold,

Christ is the *Bonum in quo omnia bona.*

to

win *Rebeckah*'s heart to *Isaac*: should you, O young men, be ...en in presenting to your own ...ew, all those amiable and excel... things that be in Christ to ...n your hearts over to Christ be... ...mes. Gen. 24. 53.

Secondly, If you would be good ...times, *Then you must know betimes ...t Jesus Christ is mighty to save.* He is able to save to the utter... ...ost, all them that come unto him, ...t believe in him, and that cast ...emselves upon him. The Lord ...th laid help upon one that is ...ighty. Christ saves perfectly, ...rowly, perpetually, them that ...me unto him. Heb. 7. 25. εἰς τὸ παντελὲς Perpetually, Constantly. Mat. 9. 28. Isa. 63. 1. Mighty to save.

The three Tongues that were ...itten upon the Cross, in Greek, ...tin, and Hebrew, to witness ...rist to be the King of the ...ws, do each of them in their ...veral Idioms avouch this Axi..., that Christ is an All-suffi...ent Saviour; and a three-fold

fold cord is not easily bro
They say, it is true of the Oyl
Rhemes, that though it be co
dually spent in the Auguratio
their Kings of *France*, yet it ne
wasteth. Christ is that pot of M
na, that Cruse of Oyl, that botto
less Ocean that never fails his p
ple; there is in Christ an All-su
ciencie for all Creatures, at all tim
in all places.

Christ is never *vacuis manibus*, empty handed.

The great *Cham* is said to hav
Tree full of Pearls hanging by c
sters; but what is the great *Cha*
Tree to Christ our Tree of Li
who hath all variety and plenty
all fruit upon him? the happine
that come to Believers by Chr
are so many, that they cannot
numbred; so great, that they ca
not be measured; so copious, th
they cannot be defined; so pretio
that they cannot be valued;
which speaks out the fulness and
sufficiencie of Christ.

Rev. 22. 2. Christ is like the Trees of the sanctuary, which were both for meat, and for medicine. Ezek. 47. 12.

There is in Christ (*plenitud*

dantia, and *plenitudo redundan-*
a fulneſs of abundance, and a
ſs of redundancy, as well as a
ſs of ſufficiency.

There is in Chriſt,

1. The fulneſs of the Spirit.
2. The fulneſs of Grace.
3. The fulneſs of the Image of God.
4. The fulneſs of the God-head.
5. The fulneſs of Glory.

But I muſt not now open, nor
on theſe things, leſt I ſhould
both my ſelf and the Reader.

Plutarch in the Life of *Phocion*,
us of a certain Gentlewo
of *Ionia*, who ſhewed the
of *Phocion* all the rich Jewels
pretious ſtones ſhe had;
anſwered her again, all my
and Jewels is my Husband
cion; ſo may a penitent Sinner
of his bleſſed Saviour, Chriſt
all my Jewels, my Riches, my
ſures, my Pleaſures, *&c.*
Sufficiency is all theſe, and
more

more than these to me.

The *Spanish* Embassadour coming to see the Treasury of S. *Mark* (in *Venice*) which is cried up throughout the world, fell groping to find whether it had any bottom, and being asked why? answered, in this, among other things; my great Master's Treasure differs from yours, in that his hath no bottom, as I find yours to have: alluding to the Mines in *Mexico*, and *Potosi*, but what are the *Spaniards* Treasures to Christs Treasures? a man may without much groping find the bottom of all earthly Treasures, but who can find the bottom of Christs Treasuries? should all created excellencies meet in one glorified breast, yet they could not inable that glorious God-like Creature to sound the bottom of those Riches and Treasures which are in Christ, *Ephes.* 3. 8. which speaks out Christs All-sufficiency: and thus much for the second thing.

Ipse Deus sufficit ad præmium. Bern.

Thirdly.

Thirdly, If you would be good betimes, *then you must know betimes there is a marvellous willingness and readiness in Christ, to embrace, entertain, to welcome returning sinners, and to shew mercy and favour to them.*

The Young Prodigal did but think of returning to his Father, but he ran and met him, and instead of kicking or killing him, he kissed him, and embraced him, his bowels rolled within him, and his compassions flowed out freely to him. *To every one that thirsteth, come ye to the Waters, and he that hath no money, come ye buy and eat, yea, come buy Wine and Milk, without Money and without Price.* *Nazianzen* improves this place thus; Oh this easie way of contract! he giveth more willingly than others sell; if thou wilt but accept, that is the price; though you have no merits, though you have nothing in your selves to encourage him, yet will you accept? If you

Luke 15. 20, 21, 22.

Isa. 55. 1. The meaning is, sell thy self, thine own wit, reason, self-worth, and that is all Christ desires, said *Augustine* upon the words.

you will, all is freely yours; Waters shall be yours, to cl you; and the Milk yours, to n rish you; and the Bread yo to strengthen you; and the W yours, to comfort you; here p sinners are called three time come; come saith Christ, c come, to shew how marvel ready and willing he is, t poor sinners should taste of G spel delicates. So in that *Joh* 37. *Jesus stood and cried, If Man thirst, let him come to me, drink.* So in that, *Rev.* 22. 17. *him that is a thirst come, and w soever will, let him take the W ter of life freely.* So in that *R* 3. 20. *Behold I stand at the door knock, if any man hear my voice, open the door, I will come in to h and will sup with him, and he w me.* And so in that, *Luke* 21. *The Master of the Ho said to his servant, go out qui ly into the Streets and Lanes of City, and bring in hither the P and the Maimed, and the Halt, a*

Cant. 2. 8. Christ comes leaping upon the Mountains, and skipping upon the Hills, to shew his readiness and willingness to do good to souls.

Blind. Here is no man of
ity, of Dignity, of Worldly
p or Glory, or of any self-
ciency, that is invited to the
, but a company of poor, rag-
deformed, slighted, neglected,
verished, wounded Sinners,
are invited to Feast with
ist.

Concerning this willingness of
ist, I shall speak more when
come to deal with old sinners
the close of this Discourse, and to
I refer you for further and
r satisfaction, concerning the
at readiness and willingness of
s Christ to entertain returning
ners.

Fourthly, If you would be
d betimes, *Then you must know*
mes, that Jesus Christ is design-
Sealed, and Appointed by the
ther, to the Office of a Media-
bour not for the meat which
eth, but for that meat which en-
b to everlasting Life, which the
Son

Joh. 6. 27. The Father sealed, even God, so the Greek hath it.

son of man shall give unto you, for him hath God the Father sealed: God the Father hath made Christs commission authentical, as men do theirs by their Seal. It is a Metaphor, a *Simile* taken from those who give Commissions under Hand and Seal. God the Father hath given it under his Hand and Seal, that Jesus Christ is the only person that he hath appointed and sealed, allowed, and confirmed to the Office of our redemption. If Jesus Christ were never so able to save, and never so willing and ready to save poor sinners, yet if he were not appointed, designed, and sealed for that work, the awakened sinner would never look out after him, nor desire Union with him, nor Interest in him; and therefore it is of very great consequence to know that God the Father hath set and sealed Christ to be a Saviour to his people; him hath God the Father sealed; sealed by way of Destination, and sealed by way

qualification, ſealed by his
octrine, ſealed by his Miracles,
aled by his Baptiſm, ſealed by
Reſurrection, but above all,
aled by his glorious Unction.
e Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
anſe the Lord hath anointed me
preach good tidings unto the meek;
hath ſent me to bind up the
ken hearted, to proclaim liberty
the captives, and the opening of
Priſon to them that are bound,
proclaim the acceptable year
he Lord, and the day of ven-
nce of our God; to comfort
that mourn, to appoint unto
m that mourn in *Zion*, to give
to them beauty for aſhes, the
l of joy for mourning, the
ment of praiſe for the Spirit of
vineſs, that they might be
led Trees of Righteouſneſs,
planting of the Lord, that
might be glorified; neither
ts nor Angels are ſealed and
ointed to the great work of
emption, but the Lord Jeſus is:
ſhould always look upon the

Iſa. 61. 1, 2, 3. Luke 4 18. Chriſt was anointed of God, 1. By way of deſignation. 2 By way of qualification. 3. By way of inauguration. This anointing was ordinarily uſed in the installing men to Offices of any eminence.

Lord Jesus, as sealed and anointed to the Office of a Mediator, and accordingly plead with him.

Ah Lord! It is thy Office, as thou art a sealed and an anointed Saviour and Redeemer, to subdue my sins, to change my Nature, to sanctifie my heart, to reform my life, and to save my soul; and therefore do it for thy Names sake; O do it for thy Office sake, do it for thy Glories sake.

Psal. 45. 8. Thou art anointed with the Oyl of Gladness above thy fellows; Thou hast a larger effusion of the Spirit upon thee than others. Thou art anointed with the Holy Ghost, and with power, after an extraordinary measure and manner; thou art indued with all Heroical Gifts, and Excellencies plentifully, abundantly, transcendently, thou art sealed and predestinated; thou art invested into this Office of Mediatorship under the Fathers hand

Acts 4. 27.

Acts 10. 8.

Joh. 1. 16.

Joh. 3. 34.

ed ſeal; and therefore whither ould I go for ſalvation, for re-miſſion, for redemption, for grace, glory, but to thee?

Fifthly, If you would be good times, *then you muſt know betimes there is no way to Salvation, but Jeſus Chriſt.*

Neither is there Salvation in other (ſpeaking of Chriſt) there is none other Name un-Heaven, given among men, hereby we muſt be ſaved; if you are ſaved, you muſt be ed by him, and him only, you uſt not look for another Savi-, nor you muſt not look for Co-Saviour, you muſt be ſaved olly by Chriſt, and only by riſt, or you ſhall never be ſaved; muſt cry out, as *Lambert* did hen he was in the Fire, and up his hands and fingers flaming) *None but Chriſt, but Chriſt.* When *Auguſtus* deſired the Senate to joyn Conſuls with him for the Government of the State;

Act. 4. 12. εἰ ἄλλῳ, that is, by or through the mediation of any other.

Act. and Mon.

Suetonius.

the Senate answered, that they held it as a diminution of his Dignity, and a disparagement of their own judgment, to joyn any with so incomparable a man as *Augustus*.

Ah Friends! It is a diminution of Christs dignity, sufficiency, and glory, in the business of your salvation, to joyn any thing with the Lord Jesus, and it is the greatest disparagement in the world to your own judgments, knowledge, prudence, and wisdom, to yoak any with Christ in the work of Redemption, in the business of Salvation.

St. *Augustine* saith, that *Marcellina* hung Christs Picture, and the Picture of *Pythagoras* together: many there are, not only in *Rome* but in *England* (yea, I am afraid in *London*) who joyn Christ and their works together, Christ and their Prayers together, Christ and their Teachers together, Christ and their Mournings together,

gether, Christ and their earnings together, Christ and their Alms together.

Ah! What a poor, what a weak, what an impotent, what an insufficient Saviour do these men make Jesus Christ to be? Except these men come off from these things, and come up only to Jesus Christ in the great business of Salvation, they will as certainly and as eternally perish (notwithstanding their hearing, knowing, and talking much of Christ) as those that never heard of Jesus Christ.

In the old Testament, God commands them not to wear a Garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and Linnen together, neither shall a Garment mingled of Linnen and Woollen come upon thee. Deut. 22. 11. ch 29 v. 19.

This Law was Figurative, and shews us, that in the case of our Justification, Acceptation, and Salvation, we are not to joyn our Works, our Services, with

Phil. 3. 9, 10. Rev 19. 8 Gal. 3. 18 ch. 2. 16.

the Righteousness of Christ; God abhors a linsie-wolsie Righteousness. And as by the Letter of this Law, in the Hebrews account, one thread of wool in a Linnen-Garment, or one Linnen thread in a Woolen Garment, made it unlawful, so the least manner of mixture in the business of Justification, makes all null and void. And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise Grace is no more Grace. But if it be of Works, then it is no more Grace; otherwise Work is no more Work: He that shall mix his Righteousness with Christs, he that shall mix his puddle with Christs purple Blood, his Rags with Christs royal Robes, his Copper with Christs Gold, his Water with Christs Wine, &c. is in the ready way to perish for ever.

Rom. 12 6 Eph. 2. 5. Rom 5. 15, 16, 17.

On Earth Kings love no Corrivals, Power is impatient of Participation. Christ will be *Alexander* or (*Nemo*) no body, he will

will be all in all in the business of justification, or he will be nothing at all; we must say of Christ, as it was once said of *Cæsar* (*socium habet neminem*) he may have a companion, *&c.* but he must not have a competitor.

1 Cor. 1. 30. Rom. 5. 19, 20.

Let us say of Christ as the Heathen once said of his petty Gods (*contemno minutulos istos Deos, modo Jovem propitium habeam*) so long as he had his *Jupiter* to friend, he regarded them not; So, so long as we have our Jesus to friend, and his Righteousness and Blood to friend, we should contemn all other things, and abhor the bringing of any thing into competition with him; a real Christian cares not for any thing that hath not (*aliquid Christi*) something of Christ in it. He that holds not wholly with Christ, doth very shamefully neglect Christ, *Aut totum mecum tene, aut totum omitte*, saith *Gregory Nazianzen.*

Eph. 3. 19, 20. Psal. 73. 25, 26 compared.

Isa. 55. 2. Rom. 10. 3.

There is no other Name, no other Nature, no other Blood, no other Merits, no other person to be justified and saved by, but Jesus Christ; you may run from creature to creature, and from duty to duty, and from ordinance to ordinance, and when you have wearied and tired out your selves in seeking ease and rest, satisfaction and remission, justification and salvation in one way and another, you will be forced after all to come to Christ, and to cry out, Ah! none but Christ, none but Christ. Ah! none to Christ, none to Christ; no works to Christs, no duties, no services to Christs, no prayers, no tears to Christs, no righteousness, no holiness to Christs.

Well Friends, remember this, that all the tears in the world cannot wipe off (meritoriously) one sin, nor all the Grace and Holiness that is in Angels and Men, buy out the Pardon of the least transgression. All remission is only

ly by the blood of Christ.

Sixthly and lastly, If you would be good betimes, *Then you must know betimes, that the heart of Jesus Christ is as much set upon sinners now he is in Heaven, as ever it was when he was upon Earth.*

Christ is no less loving, less mindful, less desirous of Sinners eternal welfare now he is in Heaven (in a far Country) than he was when he lived on Earth, witness his continuing the Ministry of Reconciliation among poor Sinners in all ages; witness the constant Treaties, that by his Embassadors and Spirit he still hath with poor Sinners, about the things of their peace, the things of eternity, witness his continual knockings, his continual callings upon poor Sinners, by his Word, Rod, Spirit, to Open, to Repent, to lay hold on Mercy, and to be at Peace with him; witness his continual wooing of poor Sinners in the face of all neglects, and put-offs;

2 Cor. 5. 20.

Rev. 3. 10. Isa. 56. 4. Isa. 27. 5.

Cant. 5. 2, 3. Luke 14.

in the face of all delays and denials; in the face of all harsh entertainment and churlish answers; in the face of all gain-saying, and carnal reasonings, in the face of all the scorn and contempt that wretched sinners put upon him; and witness that plain word, *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever*, Christ is the same afore time, in time, & after time; he is unchangeable in his Essence, in his Promises, and in his Affections. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning, and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come.*

Prov. 6. 9. Mat. 22. 4, 23, 27.

Heb. 13. 8.

Rev. 1. 8. 11. ch. 21. 6. ch. 22. 13.

It was a custom among the Turks, to cry out every morning from an high Tower, God always was, and always will be, and so salute their *Mahomet*.

The Phrase is taken from the Greek Letters, whereof *Alpha* is the first, and *Omega* the last, the first and last Letters of the Greek Alphabet is a description of me saith Christ, who am before all and after all, who am above all and in all, who am unchangeable in my self, and in my thoughts and good will to poor sinners. Therefore do not, poor souls, entertain any

my hard thoughts concerning Jesus Christ, as if he was less mindful, less pitiful, and less merciful to poor souls now he is in Heaven, than he was when his abode was in this World.

And thus I have gone over those six things that you must know concerning Christ betimes, if ever you would be good betimes. When Pope *Leo* lay upon his Death-bed, Cardinal *Bembus* citing a Text of Scripture to comfort him, he replied (*Apage has nugas de Christo*) away with these bawbles concerning Christ; but I hope better things of you, and do desire that you will say of all things (below this knowledge of Christ that I have opened to you) as that devout Pilgrim, who travelling to *Jerusalem*, and by the way visiting many brave Cities, with their rare Monuments, and meeting with many friendly entertainments would often say, I must not stay here, this is not *Jerusalem*. Ah! so do you, Young men and

and women, in the midst of all your worldly delights and contents, cry out, Oh! we must not stay here, this is not *Jerusalem*, this is not that Knowledge of Christ that I must have, if ever I am happy here, and blessed hereafter.

4. Duty.

Fourthly and lastly, *If you would be good betimes, then you must acquaint your selves with those that are good betimes.*

If you would be gracious in the spring and morning of your youth, then you must begin betimes to be much in with them, who are much in with Christ, who lie near his heart, and know much of his mind, *He that walketh with wise men shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed*; or as the Hebrew hath it, shall be boken in pieces, as when an Army is broken and routed by an enemy. *Holech* from *Halech*, walking with the

Pro. 13. 20. רוע Shall be broken, or shall be worse, from ע to be taught.

the wise, he shall be wise, for so the Original hath it; it is not talking with the wise, but walking with the wise, that will make you wise; it is not your commending and praising of the wise, but your walking with the wise, that will make you wise; it is not your taking a few turns with the wise, that will make you wise, but your walking with the wise that will make you wise; there is no getting much good by them that are good, but by making them your ordinary and constant companions.

'Twas the saying of one, as oft as I have been among wicked men, I return home less a man than I was before.

Ah Friends! you should do as *Joseph* in *Egypt*, of whom the Scripture saith, *Psal.* 105. 22. (according to the Hebrew phrase) that he tied the Princes of *Pharaoh's* Court about his heart.

If ever you would gain by the Saints, you must bind them upon your souls, you must labour to have very near, close, and intimate communion with them.

The Jews have a Proverb, that two

two dry sticks put to a green one will kindle it. The best way to be in a flame Godward, Christward, Heaven-ward, and Holinesward, is to be among the dry sticks, the kindled coals, the Saints; for as live Coals kindle those that are dead, so lively Christians will heat and enliven those that are dead Godwards, Christwards, Heavenwards, and Holinesswards. As Iron sharpeneth Iron, so doth the face of man his friend.

Prov. 27. 17.

Mens Wits, Parts, and Gifts, and Industry, commonly grow more strong, vigorous, and quick, by friendly conference and communion.

And as he that comes where sweet Spices and Ointments are stirring, carries away a sweet savour with him: So he that converseth with those that are good, shall carry away that goodness, and sweetness with him, that shall render him sweet, desirable, and delectable to others.

Polemon, that St. *Augustine* speak-
of, who was all for Wine and Play, An. Ep.
&c. became a brave man, when 130.
he came acquainted with the
Philosophers School. So many
young men, that have been all
for Wine and Women, for Play-
ing and Toying, for Vanity, and
Folly, have become brave men,
pretious men, by the company,
counsel, and example of those
who were gracious. D. &or *Taylor*
the Martyr, rejoyced that ever he
came into Prison, because he came
thither to have acquaintance with
that Angel of God, *John Brad-*
ford (as he calls him) so doubtless
many young persons there be, that
have much cause to rejoyce, and
for ever to bless the Lord, that
ever they came acquainted with
such and such (who fear the Lord
and who walk in his ways) for the
good that they have received by
them.

Algerius an *Italian* Martyr,
said, he had rather be in a Prison
with

with *Cato*, than with *Cæsar* in the Senate-house.

Moses was of the same mind and metal. Heb. 11. 24, 25, 26, 27.

Ah! Young men, young men, you were better be with the people of God, when they are in the lowest and most contemptible condition, than with the great (wicked) ones of the World, when they are in all their Royalty, and Glory; in the day of account you will find that they have made the best Market, who have rather chosen to keep company with *Lazarus* though in his rags, than they would (with others) keep company with *Dives*, though in Purple Robes.

Those that keep ill company are like those that walk in the Sun, who are tann'd insensibly.

Well, Young men, remember this, cloaths and company do oftentimes tell tales, in a mute, but significant language.

Tell me with whom thou goest, and I will tell thee what thou art, saith the *Spanish* Proverb. *Cicero* (though a Heathen) had rather to have no Companion, than a bad one: the Lord grant, that this

his Heathen (and others among them, that were of the same mind with him) may never rise up in judgment against any of you, into whose hands this Treatise may fall.

And thus I have dispatched those four things that you must be acquainted with betimes, (*viz.* the Scripture, your own hearts, and conditions, the Lord Jesus Christ, and those that fear him) if ever you would be good betimes.

Secondly, *If you would be good betimes*, if you would seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of your days, *Then you must shun the occasions of sin betimes.* A man will never begin to be good, till he begin to decline those occasions that have made him bad, 1 *Thess.* 5. 22. *Abstain from all appearance of evil.*

We must shun (*quicquid fuit male coloratum*) whatsoever looks but ill favouredly, as *Bernard* hath it.

You must shun and be shie of the very appearance of sin, of the very shews and shadows of sin. The word εἶδος, which is ordinarily rendred *Appearance*, signifies kind,

kind or sort; and so the meaning of the Apostle seems to be this: *Abstain from all sort, or the worst kind of evil*; from all, that is truly so, be it never so small.

The least sin is dangerous; Cæsar was stabb'd with Bodkins, and many have been eaten up of Mice and Lice.

The least spark may consume the greatest House, the least leak may sink the greatest Ship, the least sin is enough to undo thy soul, and therefore shun all the occasions that lead unto it.

Job 31. 1. Gen. 39. 10 Psal. 26. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

Job made a covenant with his eyes; *Joseph* wou'd not be in the room where his Mistress was; and *David* (when himself) would not sit with vain persons. As long as there is fuel in our hearts for a temptation, we cannot be secure. He that hath Gunpowder about him, had need keep far enough off from sparkles; he that is neither tender of his credit abroad, or comfort at home, had need shun, and be

shie

shye of the very shew and shadow of sin! he that would neither wound Conscience, nor Credit, God, nor Gospel, had need hate the garment spotted with the flesh. Jude 23. The sin, and the coat of the sin is to be hated, saith *Ambrose.*

In the Law, God commanded his people, not only that they should worship no Idol, but that they should demolish all the Monuments of them, and that they should make no Covenant nor Affinity with those who worshipped them; and all, lest they should be drawn by these occasions to commit Idolatry with them; he that would not taste of the forbidden fruit, must not so much as gaze on it, and he that would not be bit by the Serpent, must not so much as parley with the Serpent. *Latet anguis in herba,* Snakes are found amongst roses. Numb. 6. 3, 4. *Quid est vitare peccata, nisi vitare occasiones peccatorum?* Milan.

It is very observable, That in the Law, the *Nazarite* was not only commanded to abstain from Wine and strong Drink, but also he might not eat Grapes, whether moist or dry, or any thing that

What is it to avoid sin, but to avoid the occasions of sin.

that is made of the Vine-Tree from the Kernels, even to the Husk; but why not these small things, in which there could be no danger of drunkenness? surely lest by the contentment of these he might be drawn to desire the Wine, and so be brought on to sin, to break his Vow (and so make work for Hell, or for the Physician of Souls.) God hereby forbidding the most remote occasions, shews how wary and exactly careful men should be, to shun and avoid all occasions, provocations, and appearances of evil; and indeed, we had need to keep off from slippery places, who can hardly stand fast on dry ground; he that ventures upon the occasion of sin, and then prayes, *Lord, lead me not into temptation*, is like him that thrusts his finger into the fire, and then prays that it may not be burnt; or like him that is resolved to quench the fire with Oyl, which instead of quenching it, is as fuel to

feed it, and encreaſe it.

It was a notable ſaying of one, *Bernard* in Cant. Ser. 65.

...us eſt miraculum inter vehe-...tes occaſiones non cadere, quam ...rtuos ſuſcitare, It is a greater ...iracle, not to fall, being among ...ong occaſions, than it is to raiſe ...p the dead: he that would not ...e defiled, muſt not touch Pitch; ...e that would not be burnt, muſt ...t carry fire in his boſom; he ...at would not eat the meat, muſt ...t meddle with the broth; he ...at would not fall into the Pit, ...uſt not dance upon the brink; ...e that would not feel the blow, ...uſt keep off from the Train; ...*ep thee far from a falſe matter*, ...xod. 33. 7.

Pro. 6. 27, 28, 29. *Non diu tutus eſt periculo proximus.* *Cypr.*

He that will not flye from the ...ccaſions and allurements of ſin ...though they may ſeem never ſo ...leaſant to the eye, or ſweet to the ...aſte) ſhall find them in the end ...o be more ſharp than Vinegar, ...ore bitter than Wormwood, ...ore deadly than poyſon.

He is not long ſafe, that is near to danger.

There

There is a great truth in that saying of the Son of *Syrach*, *He that loveth danger shall perish therein; he that will not decline danger, shall not be able to decline destruction.* Eccl. 3. 26, 27.

Socrates speaks of two young men that flung away their belts, when being in an Idol Temple, the lustrating water fell upon them, detesting (saith the Historian) the Garment spotted by the flesh: and will you, O young men, play and toy with the occasions of sin? the Lord forbid.

There are stories of several Heathens, that have shunned, and avoided the occasion of sin; and will you dare to venture upon the occasions of sin?

Alexander would not see the woman after whom he might have lusted.

Scipio Africanus, Warring in *Spain*, took new *Carthage* by storm, at which time a beautiful and Noble Virgin fled to him for

succour to preserve her chasti-
being but four and twenty
old (and so in the heat of
) hearing of it, would not
her to come into his sight,
fear of temptation, but caused
to be restored in safety to her
her.

Livia counselled her Husband
ustus, not only not to do
ong, but not to seem to do
&c.

Cæsar would not search *Pom-*
's Cabinet, lest he should find
matters of revenge.

Plato mounted upon his Horse,
judging himself a little mo-
with pride, did presently light
m his Horse, lest he should be
ertaken with loftiness in ri-
ng.

Theseus is said to cut off his gol-
locks, lest his enemies should
e advantage by taking hold of
em.

Ah! Young men, young men,
ll the very Heathens thus shun
d flie from the occasions of
sin,

Aure. Victor.

Dio. in vita.

sin, and will not you? will not you who sit under the Sun-shine of the Gospel? these will in the great day of account be sad and sore witnesses against those that dally and play with the occasions of sin.

To prevent carnal carefulness Christ sends his Disciples to School to the irrational Creatures, *Mat.* 6. 26. —— 32. And to prevent you closing with the occasions of sin, I'le send you to School to the like Creatures, that you may learn by them to shun and avoid the occasions of sin.

The *Sepiæ*, a certain kind of fish perceiving themselves in danger of taking, by an instinct which they have, they do darken the water, and so many times escape the Net which is laid for them.

Geese (they say) when they fly over *Taurus*, they keep stones in their mouths, lest by gagling they should discover themselves to the Eagles, which are amongst the Mountains waiting for them; now if

if all these considerations put together, will not work you to decline the occasions of sin, I know not what will. There is a truth in that old saying.

He that will no evil do,
Must do nothing belongs thereto.

The *Israelites* must have no leaven in their houses, till the Passover be done, lest they should be tempted to eat of it. Exod. 12. 19.

3. Direction.

Thirdly, *If you would be good betimes, then you must remember the eye of God betimes.*

If you would seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of your days, then you must study Gods Omnipotence betimes. *Doth not he see my ways and number all my steps? for his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings. There is no darkness nor shadow of death, where the* Psal. 139. 2, 14. Job 31. 4. Ch. 34. 21, 22, &c.

workers of iniquity may hide themselves.

Non se putent adulteri noctis tenebri, vel parietum obtegi. Beda.

I have read that *Paphnutius* converted two famous young Strumpets, *Thais* and *Ephron*, from uncleanness, only with this Argument, that God seeth all things in the dark, when the doors are fast, the windows shut, and the curtains drawn. By this very Argument, *Solomon* labours to take off his young men from carnal and sinful courses; *And why wilt thou, my Son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger? for the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings.* Thou mayest deceive all the world, like that counterfeit *Alexander* in *Josephus*'s story, but *Augustus* will not be deceived, he hath quicker and sharper eyes.

Prov. 5.20. 21.

Noli peccare, Deus videt, angeli astant, &c.

Take heed what thou doll, God beholds thee, Angels observe thee.

Ah! Young men, young men, you may deceive this man, and that, and as easily deceive yourselves, but you cannot deceive him, who is (πανόφθαλμος, *totus oculus*)

oculus) all eye. As the eyes of a well-drawn Picture are fastened upon thee, which way soever thou turnest, so are the eyes of the Lord. I have read of one, who being tempted to Adultery, said, they could not be private enough, and being carried from room to room, answered, we are not yet private enough, God is here.

Ah friends! his eyes which are ten thousand times brighter than the Sun, compasseth thy words, thy ways, thy works, thy thoughts, thy bed, thy board, thy bench. The *Egyptian* Hieroglyphick for God, was an eye on a scepter, shewing that he sees and rules all things. Jer. 13. 17. ch. 29. 23.

Ah Friends! All Thoughts, Words, Hopes, and Hearts, are naked, opened, dissected, and quartered before that God with whom you have to do. God is very curious and exact in marking and observing what is done by men, that he may render to every man according to his works. Heb. 4. 13. *Tetrachelismena.*

Aug. de Civ. Dei. l. 6. c. 10.

Sr. *Augustine* speaks of an old *Comœdian*, when having no other Spectators, went usually into the Theatre, and acted before the Statues of the Gods.

Ah! Young Men and Women, the eye of God should be more to you, than all the world besides; O that the Scripture might be written with the Pen of a Diamond upon your hearts. *Hear ye not me* (saith the Lord) *and will ye not tremble at my presence?* There is a great truth in that saying of his, (*Magna nobis ex hoc indita est probitatis necessitas, quia omnia ante oculos judicis facimus cuncta cernentis*) A great necessity of goodness is from hence put into us, because we do all things before the eyes of a Judge, that sees all things.

Jer. 5. 23, 22.

Boerius. de Consol. l. 5.

4. Direction.

2 Tim. 1. 3

Fourthly, *If you would be good betimes, then you must hearken to the voice of Conscience betimes.*

A man will never begin to be good, till he begins to hearken to what Conſcience ſpeaks: So long as man turns a deaf ear to Conſcience, he is a falſe Priſoner to Satan, and a ſure Enemy to Good.

Pſal 58. 4. Joh. 3 20, 21

Ah! how good might many have been, had they but begun betimes to hearken to Conſcience!

Ah! Young men, do not dally with Conſcience, do not play, do not trifle with Conſcience, do not ſtop your ears againſt Conſcience: he that will not in his Youth give Conſcience audience, ſhall at laſt be forced to hear ſuch lectures from Conſcience, as ſhall make his life a very Hell. A ſleepy Conſcience is like a ſleepy Lyon, when he awakes he roars and tears; ſo will Conſcience, *Mark* 9. 22. Conſcience is (*mille teſtes*) a thouſand witneſſes, for or againſt a man; he that hath long turned the deaf ear to Conſcience, ſhall at laſt

Such ſinful Conſcience o be *Judex*, *Index*, *Vindex*.

find his Conscience like *Prometheus's vulture*, that lies ever a gnawing. *Judas* found it so, and *Spira* found it so, and *Blaer* a great Counsellor of *Scotland* found it so.

Jo. Wolf lect. m m. To 2. ad An. 1547.

I have read of one *John Hofmeister*, that fell sick in his Inn, as he was travelling towards *Auspurge* in *Germany*, and grew to that horrour of Conscience, that they were fain to bind him in his bed with Chains, where he cryed out, that he was for ever cast off by God, and that the promises that were set before him would do him no good, and all because he had wounded his Conscience, and turned a deaf ear to Conscience.

Well, Young Men, if you will not betimes hearken to Conscience, you shall at last hear Conscience saying to you, as the probationer Disciple said to Christ, Mat. 8. 19. *Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest*; So saith Conscience; Sinner, I have called upon

on thee many a thousand times, and told thee, that I must by commission, be thy best friend, or thy worst enemy, but thou wouldest not hear; and therefore, now I will follow thee whither ever thou goest; fast, and I will follow thee, and fill thee with horrours, and terrours; feast, and I will follow thee, and shew thee such a Handwriting upon the Wall, as shall cause thy countenance to change, thy thoughts to be troubled, the joints of thy loins to be loosed, and thy knees to dash one against another; stay at home, and I will follow thee from bed to board; go abroad, and I will follow thee into all places and companies, and thou shalt know that it is an evil and a bitter thing, that thou hast so often and so long neglected my calls, and disobeyed my voice, and walkt contrary to me; now thou shalt find a truth in that saying of *Luther* (*una guttula malæ conscientiæ totum mare*, &c.) one drop of an evil Conscience

Dan. 5. 5, 6. *Tolle conscientiam, tolle omnia*; Take away conscience, and take away all, saith the Heathen.

swallows up the whole Sea of worldly joy.

Well Young men, there is a day a coming, wherein a good Conscience will be better than a good Purse, for then the Judge will not be put off with a suit of complements or fair words, nor drawn aside with hope of reward; and therefore as you would be able to hold up your heads in that day, make Conscience of hearkning to the voice of Conscience in this your day.

5. Direction.

Fifthly, *If you would be good betimes, then you must know betimes wherein true happiness lies.*

Quot homines tot sententiæ, so many men, so many minds.

For a man will never begin to be good, till he begins to understand wherein his happiness consists.

The Philosophers speaking of happiness, were divided into two hundred eighty eight opinions, every one intending something, and yet resolving nothing. Therefore the

the man in *Plutarch*, hearing them wrangle about mans (*ſummum bonum*) chiefeſt good, one placing it in this, and another in that; he went to the Market, and bought up all that was good, hoping among all he ſhould not miſs of it, but he did. Many look for happineſs in ſin, others look for it in the Creatures, but they muſt all ſay, it is not in us (*Nil dat quod non habet*) nothing can give what it hath not; if the Conduit pipe hath no water, it can give no water; if a man hath no money, he can give no money, if the creatures have no happineſs, they can give no happineſs; Now this Jewel, this Pearl, happineſs, is not to be found in the breaſt, in the boſom of Creatures. In a word, becauſe I muſt haſten to a cloſe, mans happineſs lies,

Iſa 56.12. Job 28.14.

First, In his Communion with God, as Experience and Scripture demonſtrates. Happy is that people that is in ſuch a caſe (but give me that word again) yea, happy is that people, whoſe God is the

Pſal. 114.1.

Lord. A man whose soul in *communion* with God, shall find more pleasure in a *desart*, in a *dungeon*, in a den, yea in *death*, than in the *Palace* of a *Prince*, than in all *worldly* delights and contents, &c.

Secondly, in pardon of sin, *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.* It is not, blessed is the honourable man, but blessed is the pardon'd man; It is not, blessed is the rich man, but blessed is the pardoned man; It is not, blessed is the learned man, but blessed is the pardoned man; It is not, blessed is the politick man, but blessed is the pardoned man; It is not, blessed is the victorious man, but blessed is the pardoned man. Do with me what thou wilt, since thou hast pardoned my sins, saith *Luther.*

Psal. 32. 1, 2.

Thirdly, In a compleat fruition and enjoyment of God, when we shall be here no more: *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see*

see God. Now they see him but darkly, but in heaven they shall see him face to face, they shall know as they are known. But of these things I have spoken largely elsewhere, and therefore shall satisfie my self with these hints. Mat. 5. 8. 1 Cor. 13 12.

6. Direction.

Lastly, *If you would be good betimes, then you must break your covenant with sin betimes.*

You must fall out with your lusts betimes; you must arm and fence your selves against sin betimes; a man never begins to fall in with Christ, till he begins to fall out with his sins; till sin and the soul be two, Christ and the soul cannot be one: *Now to work your hearts to this, you should always look upon sin under these Notions.* Isa. 28. 15, 18.

1. Notion.

First, *If you would have the league dissolved betwixt sin and your souls betimes, then look upon sin under the notion of an enemy betimes.*

Dearly

1 Pet. 2. 11. Sins especially against knowledge are (*peccata vulnerantia, & devastantia*) wounding and wasting.

Dearly Beloved, I beseech you as Strangers and Pilgrims abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul. As the Viper is killed by her young ones in her belly, so are poor sinners betrayed and killed by their own lusts, that are nourished in their bosoms.

Pittacus, a Philosopher, challenging *Phylon* the *Athenian* Captain (in their wars against them) to single Combat, carried a Net privily, and so caught him, and overcame him; So doth sin with poor sinners. The dangerous, pernicious, malignant nature of sin, you may see in the story of the *Italian*, who first made his Enemy deny God, and then stabbed him to the heart, and so at once murthered both body and soul. Sin betrays us into the hand of the Devil, as *Dalilah* did *Sampson* into the hands of the *Philistines*.

Sugered Poisons go down pleasantly; Oh! but when they are down

down they gall and gnaw, and gripe the very heart-strings asunder; it is so with sin: Ah! poor souls, have not you often found it so?

When *Phocus* the Murtherer thought to secure himself by building high walls, he heard a Voice from Heaven, telling him, that though he built his Bulwarks never so high, yet the Sin within would soon undermine all.

S. *Ambrose* reports of one *Theotimus*, that having a *disease* upon his body, the Physician told him, that except he did abstain from intemperance, *drunkenness* and *uncleanness*, he would lose his eyes: his heart was so desperately set upon his sins, that he cries out, then (*vale lumen amicum*) farewel sweet light.

Ah! how did his lusts war both against body and soul!

The Old Man is like a Treacherous friend, and a friendly Traitor; though it be a harder thing

thing to fight with a mans lusts, than it is to fight with the Cross, yet you must fight or die; if you are not the death of your sins, they will prove the death of your souls.

As one of the Dukes of *Venice*, died fighting against the *Nausatines* with his weapons in his hand.

The Oracle told the *Cyrheans* (*nocteſque dieſque bella gerendum*) they could not be happy, unleſs they waged War night and day; no more can we, except we live and die fighting against our lusts.

Ah! Young Men, Can you look upon sin under the Notion of an Enemy, and not break with it, and not arm against it?

Well, remember this, the pleasure and sweetness that follows victory over sin, is a thousand times beyond that seeming sweetness that is in sin; and as victory over sin is the sweetest victory, so it is the greatest victory; there is no conquest to that which is gotten over a mans own corruptions; *He that is slow to anger, is better*

than

than the Mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a City.

It is noble to overcome an enemy without, but it is more noble to overcome an enemy within; it is honourable to overcome fiery flames, but it is far more honourable to overcome fiery lusts.

When *Valentinian* the Emperor was upon his dying bed, among all his Victories only one comforted him, and that was victory over his worst enemy, (*viz.*) his own naughty heart. Rom. 7. 22, 23. 2 Cor. 10. 3, 4, 5, 6. Gal. 5. 17.

Ah! Young men, young men, your worst Enemies are within you, and all their plots, designs, and assaults are upon your souls, your most noble part, they know if that Fort Royal be won, all is their own; and you are undone, and shall be their slaves for ever; and therefore it stands you upon, to arm your selves against these in bred enemies; and if you ingage Christ in the quarrel, you will carry the day, and when

when you shall lye upon your dying beds, you will then find that there is no comfort to that, which ariseth from the conquests of your own hearts, your own lusts.

2 Notion.

2 Pet. 3. 6. Gal. 3 10. Joh. 8. 34

Secondly, *If you would break Covenant with sin, if you would arm and fence your selves against sin betimes, then look upon sin as the Souls Bonds.*

For as bonds tie things together, so doth sin tie the sinner and the curse together, it binds the sinner and wrath together, it links the sinner and Hell together. I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. Iniquity is a chain, a bond; now, bonds and chains gall the body, and so doth sin the soul; and as poor Captives are held fast in their chains, so are sinners in their sins, they cannot redeem themselves by price, nor by power.

2 Tim. 2. ult.

Ah! Young men, young men, no

no bondage to Soul-bondage, no slavery to Soul-slavery; the *Israelites* bondage under *Pharaoh*, and the Christians bondage under the *Turks*, is but the bondage of the body, of the baser and ignobler part of man; but yours is Soul-bondage, Soul-slavery, which is the saddest and greatest of all.

S. *Augustine* saith of *Rome*, that she was the great Mistress of the World and the great drudge of Sin.

Ah friends! you should never look upon your *sins*, but you should look upon them as your *bonds*, yea, as the worst bonds that ever were; all others chains are golden chains, chains of Pearl, compared to those chains of Iron and Brass, those chains of lusts, with which you are bound. Ah! who can thus look upon his chains, his sins, and not loath them, and not labour for freedom from them? *Justinius* the Emperours Motto was, (*Libertas res inæstimabilis*) Liberty is invaluable; if Civil Liberty be, surely Spiritual Liberty is much more; if you ask souls that were once in a state of bondage, but are

are now Christs free-men, they will tell you so.

Chrysost. Hom. 19. in prior. Epist. ad Corinth.

It was a good observation of St. *Chrysostom*, that *Joseph* was the free-man, and his Mistress was the servant, when she was at the beck of her own lusts, when she tempted, and he refused. Such as live most above sin and temptation, are the greatest free-men; others that live under the power of their lusts, are but slaves, and in bonds, though they dream and talk of freedom, *Tit.* 3. 3.

3. Notion.

Thirdly, *If you would break league with sin, and arm and fence your selves against it, then look always upon sin under the notion of fire.*

Jude 23. *Arpazontes* signifies a violent snatching, as the tender hearted Mother to save the life of her child, pulls it hastily, and with violence out of the fire.

And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire. Oh snatch them out of their sins, as you would snatch a child, a friend out of the fire! Or as the Angel snatched *Lot* out of *Sodom*, hastily, and with a holy violence: natural fire may burn the house, the goods,

goods, the treasure, the servant, the child, the wife, the body; but this fire burns the soul, it destroys and consumes that noble part, which is more worth than all the treasures of a thousand worlds; every man hath a hand, and a heart to quench that fire that burns in his Neighbours house, but few men have either hands or hearts to quench the fire that burns their Neighbours souls: this is, and this shall be for a Lamentation.

I have read of one, who upon the violence of any temptation to sin, would lay his hand upon burning coals, and being not able to abide it, would say to himself, Oh! how unable shall I be to endure the pains of hell? And this restrained him from evil: but what is the fire of hell, to the fire of sin? Now to provoke you to look upon sin under the notion of fire, consider with me, the sundry resemblances between material and immaterial fire, between corporal common fire, and between this

Dr. *Denisons* three-fold resolution, part 2. sect. 2.

this Spiritual Fire, Sin. As

First, Fire is terrible and dreadful; a Ship on fire, an house on fire, Oh how dreadful is it! so sin set home upon the Conscience, is exceeding terrible and dreadful. *Mine iniquity* (so the Hebrew) *is greater than I can bear:* Sin or Iniquity is often put for the punishment of sin, by a Metonymy of the efficient for the effect; for sin is the natural Parent of punishment. *Mine iniquity*, saith *Cain*, *is so great, and lies so heavy, so terrible and dreadful upon my Conscience, that it cannot be forgiven:* and thus by his diffidence he stabs two at once; the Mercy of God, and his own Soul. So Judas, *I have sinned, in that I have betrayed innocent blood, and he went and hanged himself.*

Gen 4.13. *Mentiris, Cain*, thou lyest, *Cain* saith one on the Text. Mat. 27. 3, 4, 5.

As there is no fighting with a mighty Fire, so there is no bearing up, when God sets home sin upon the Conscience; a man will then chuse strangling, or hanging rather than living under such wounds and lashes of Conscience.

Histo-

Histories abound with instances of this Nature; but I must hasten to a close.

Secondly, Fire is most dangerous and pernicious, when it breaks forth of the Chimney, or of the house; so it is with sin. Sin is bad in the eye, worse in the tongue, worser in the heart, but worst of all in the life. Fire, when out of its proper place, may do much hurt in the house, but when it flames abroad, then it doth most mischief to others.

2 Sam. 12. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.

Sin in the heart may undo a man, but sin in the life may undo others, as well as a mans self. Set a guard upon the eye, a greater upon thy heart, but the greatest of all upon thy life.

Job 31. 1. Prov. 4. 23. Eph. 5. 15.

Salvian relates, how the Heathen did reproach some Christians, who by their lewd lives, made the Gospel of Christ to be reproach, where (said they) is that good Law which they do believe? where are those Rules of

Salvianus de G. l. 4.

of godliness which they do learn; they read the holy Gospel, and yet are unclean; they hear the Apostles Writing, and yet are drunk; they follow Christ, and yet disobey Christ; they profess a holy Law, and yet do lead impure lives.

But the lives of other Christians have been so holy; that the very Heathens observing them, have said, surely, this is a good God whose servants are so good.

It is brave, when the life of a Christian is a Commentary upon Christs Life.

Augustine. One speaking of the Scripture saith, (*verba vivenda, non legenda*) they are words to be lived and practised, not read only.

Plutarch. A Heathen adviseth us to demean our selves so circumspectly, as our Enemies did always behold us.

Epictetus. And said another, for shame, either live as Stoicks, or leave off the name of Stoicks. Sirs, live as Christians, or lay down the name of Christians.

Thirdly, Fire hardens, it makes the weak and limber Clay to become stiff and strong for the Potters use. So Sin hardens, it hardens the heart against the Commands of God, the Calls of Christ, and the Strivings of the Spirit. Jer. 5. 3. ch. 19. ult. Isa. 9. 13.

As you see in *Pharaoh*, the *Jews*, and most that are under the sound of the Gospel.

Ah! How many hath this fire (Sin) hardened in these days, by working them to slight soul-softning means, and by drawing them to entertain hardening thoughts of God, and to fall in with soul-hardning company, and soul-hardening principles, and soul hardening examples, or hardened and unsensible hearers? One long since thus complained, that they did (*Patientius ferre Christi jacturam, quam suam*) more calmly pass by the injuries done to Christ, than those which are done unto themselves: This age is full of such hardened unsensible souls. Jer. 2. 25. ch. 18. 12.

Fourth-

Fourthly, Fire is a lively active Element; so is Sin.

Gen. 22. Psal 51. Job 3. Mat. 26. Rom. 1. 15. &c.

Ah! how lively and active was the fire in *Abraham*, *David*, *Job*, St. *Peter*, St. *Paul*, and others Saints; though Christ by his death hath given its mortal wound, yet it lives, and is, and will be active in the dearest Saints. Though sin and Grace were not born together, neither shall they die together; yet while Believers live in this World, they must live together. There is a History that speaks of a Fig-tree that grew in a stone wall, and all means was used to kill it; they cut off the branches, and it grew again, they cut down the body and it grew again, they cut it up by the Root, and still it lived, and grew, untill they pulled down the stone wall; till Death shall pull down our stone walls, sin will live, this fire will burn.

Isidore the Monk, was very much out, who vaunted that he had self in himself no motion to sin forty years together.

We may say of Sin, as some say of Cats, that they have many lives; kill them, and they will

live

e again, kill them again and they ill live again: So kill Sin ce, and it will live again; kill again, and it will live again, e. Sin oftentimes is like that onster *Hydra*, cut off one head, nd many will riſe up in its oom.

Fifthly, Fire is of a penetra ng nature, it pierceth and wind- h it ſelf into every corner, and ink, and ſo doth ſin wind it lf into our thoughts, words, and orks, it will wind it ſelf in- o our underſtandings, to darken em; and into our judgments, pervert them; and into our ills, to poyſon them; and into ir affections, to diſorder them; nd into our Conſciences, to cor- pt them; and into our carriages debaſe them. Sin will wind lf into every Duty, and every ercy, it will wind it ſelf into ery one of our enjoyments, and ncernments.

Hannibal, having overcome e *Romans*, put on their armor

Iſa. 1. 5, 6. Rom 7. 13, 17. Sin is (*malum Catholicum*) A Catholick evil. *Quodcunq; in peccato, peccatum eſt.*) What ſoever is in ſin, is ſin.

on his Souldiers; and so by that policy, they being taken for *Romans*, won a City; but what are *Hannibal*'s wiles to sins wiles, to Satans wiles? if you have a mind to be acquainted with their wiles, look over my Treatise, called, *Pretious Remedies against Satans Devices.*

Psal. 21. 9. 2 Pet. 2. 5, 6. Prov. 6. 32. Eccl. 9. 18. Prov. 13. 13. Ch 20. 29. Ch. 11. 3. Ch. 15. 25. Ch. 21. 7.

Sixthly and lastly, Fire is a devouring, a consuming Element, it turns all Fuel into Ashes, it is a Wolf that eats up all. So sin is a Fire that devours and consumes all, it turned *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* into ashes, it hath destroyed the *Chaldean*, *Persian*, and *Grecian* Kingdoms, and will at last destroy the *Roman* Kingdom also; this Wolf eat up *Sampson*'s strength, *Absolom*'s beauty, *Achitophel*'s policy, and *Herod*'s glory, *&c.* It hath drowned one world already, and will at last burn another, even this. Oh the hopes, the hearts, the happiness, the joys, the comforts, the souls that this Fire (Sin) hath

con-

consumed, and destroyed, &c.

Peter Camois a Bishop of Berry in France, in his draught of Eternity, Numb. 7. 5. tells us, that some devout Personages caused those words of the Prophet Isaiah to be written in Letters of Gold upon their Chimney-pieces, *Who amongst us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who amongst us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?* Isa. 33. 14.

Ah! Young men, young men, I desire that you would always look upon sin under the notion of fire, yea, as such fire as lays the foundation for everlasting fire, for everlasting burnings, and this may work when other will not.

I have read of a grave and chast Matron, who being moved to commit folly with a lewd ruffian, after some discourse he called for a pan of burning coals, requesting him for her sake to hold his finger in them but an hour; he answered, this is

an unkind request; to whom she replied, that seeing he would not do so much as to put one finger upon the coals for an hour, she could not yield to do that, for which she should be tormented, both body and soul in Hell fire for ever. The Application is easie, *&c.*

4. Notion.

Fourthly, *If you would break with sin betimes, if you would arm against sin in the spring and morning of your days, then you should look upon sin under the notion of a thief.*

2 Pet. 2. 4. Gen. 3. And indeed sin is the greatest Thief, the greatest Robber in the World, it robbed the Angels of all their Glory, it robbed *Adam* of his Paradise and Felicity, and it hath robbed all the Sons of *Adam* of five precious Jewels, the least of which was more worth than Heaven and Earth.

1. It hath robbed them of the holy and glorious Image of God, which would have been fairly in-

graven

graven upon them, had *Adam* blood, &c.

2. It hath robbed them of their Sonship, and of Sons hath made them Slaves.

3. It hath robbed them of their friendship, and made them enemies.

4. It hath robbed them of their communion and fellowship with Father, Son, and Spirit, and made them strangers and aliens.

5. It hath robbed them of their glory, and made them vile and miserable. It hath robbed many a Nation of the Gospel, and many a Parish of many a happy Guide, and many a Christian of the favour of God, the Joys of the Spirit, and the peace of Conscience.

Well did one of the Fathers call pride and vainglory, the sweet spoiler of spiritual excellencies, and a pleasant Thief.

Oh! the Health, the Wealth, the Honour, the Friends, the Relations that Sin hath robbed thousands of!

Nay, It hath robbed many of their Gifts, their Arts, their Parts, their Memory, their Judgments;

yea, their very reason, as you may see in *Pharaoh*, *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Belshazzar*, *Achitophel*, *Haman*, *Herod*, and those Babylonish Princes that accused *Daniel*.

And so in *Menippus* of *Phœnicia*, who having lost his goods, strangled himself. And so *Dinarchus Phidon*, at a certain loss cut his own throat to save the charge of a Cord. And so *Augustus Cæsar* (in whose time Christ was born) was so troubled and astonished at the relation of an overthrow from *Varus*, that for certain months together, he let the hair of his head and beard grow still, and wore it long; yea, and other-whiles would run his head against the doors, crying out, *Quintilius Varus* deliver up my Legions again; by all which it is most apparent, that sin is the greatest Thief in all the world.

Suetonius.

Oh! Then who would not break League and Covenant with it, and be still in pressing of God to do justice upon it, &c.

5. No-

5. Notion.

Fifthly, *If you would break with sin, and arm and fence your selves against sin betimes, then you must look upon sin under the notion of a burden betimes.* Nah. 1. 13. Hab. 1. 1. Mal. 1. 1

And indeed, Sin of all burdens is the heaviest burden in all the world. *Innumerable evils have compassed me about, mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of my head; therefore my heart faileth me.* And again, *Mine iniquities are gone over my head* (saith the same person) *as an heavy burden, they are too heavy for me to bear.* Sin is a weight that easily besets poor souls, it is a burden that so troubles them, and puzzles them, that so curbs them, and girds them, that so presses and oppresses them, as that it wrings many bitter tears from their eyes, and many sad and grievous sighs and groans from their hearts. Psal 40. 12. Psal. 38. 4. Heb. 12. 1. Rom. 7. 13. *vide.*

Again, As Sin is a burden to

Jude 6. Christian; so it is a burden to Heaven, it made Heaven weary to bear the Angels that fell; no sooner had they sinned but Heaven groans to be eased of them, and it never left groaning till Justice had turned them a groaning to Hell.

Numb. 16 16, 35. Again, As sin is a burden to Heaven, so sin is a burden to the Earth; witness her swallowing up *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, their Wives, Children, Goods, Servants, *&c.* Ah sinners! your sins make the very Earth to groan; they make the Earth weary of bearing you. Oh! how doth the Earth groan and long to swallow up those Earthly wretches, whose hopes, whose hearts are buried in the Earth; these shall have little of Heaven, but enough of Earth when they come to die.

Rom 8. 19. 20, 21, 22, 23. *Cornelius à Lapide*, tells a story that he heard of a famous Preacher, who shewing the bondage of the Creature, brings in the Creatures

tures complaining thus, Oh! that we could serve such as are Godly! Oh! that our substance and our flesh might be incorporated into godly people, that so we might rise into glory with them; O! that our flesh might not be incorporated into the flesh of sinners; for if it be, we shall go to Hell, & would any Creature go to Hell? O! we are weary of bearing sinners, we are weary of serving of sinners; thus the Creatures groan, thus the Creatures complain, the sinners sins forcing them to it, &c.

Again, Sin is a burden to God, *Behold I am pressed under you, as a Cart is pressed that is full of sheaves.* By this plain, pithy, country-comparison, God shews how sadly he is pressed and oppressed; how sorely he is wearied and tired with those peoples sins. Divine patience is even worn out; Justice hath lift up her hand, and will bear with them no longer. God seems to groan under the pressure of their

Amos 2. 1

sins, as a Cart seems to do under a heavy load; of this God complains by the Prophet *Isaiah*, *Thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities.* I am as weary of your sins, as a travelling woman is weary of her pains, saith God. Sin was such a burden to God, that he sweeps it off with a sweeping flood, *Gen.7. &c.*

Isa.43. 24.

Again, Sin is a burden to Christ, it made him sweat, as never man sweat; it made him sweat great drops of clutted or congeal'd blood. Sin put Christs whole body into a bloody sweat, it made him groan pitifully, when he bare our sins in his body on the Tree. Sin made his soul heavy even to the death; and had he not been one that was mighty, yea, that was Almighty, he had fainted and failed under his burden. And thus you see what a burden sin is to man, to the Creatures, to Heaven, to Earth, to God, to Christ, and therefore

Luke 22. 44. A strange watering of a Garden. *Bern.* 1 Pet.2 24

Isa.9 6.

as

as you would break with sin betimes, look always upon it as a burden, yea, as the greatest and heaviest burden in all the World, &c.

6. Notion.

Sixthly and lastly, *If you would break Covenant with sin, and arm, and fence your selves against it betimes, then you must look upon it betimes, under the notion of a Tyrant.*

Tit. 3.3. And indeed, sin is the worst and greatest Tyrant in the world. Other Tyrants can but Tyrannize over our bodies, but Sin is a Tyrant that tyrannizes over both body and soul, as you may see in the sixth, and seventh of the *Romans*. Sin is a Tyrant that hath a kind of jurisdiction in most mens hearts, it sets up the Law of Pride, the Law of Passion, the Law of Oppression, the Law of Formality, the Law of Hypocrisie, the Law of Carnality, the Law of Self-love, the

the Law of carnal Reason, the Law of Unbelief, and strictly commands Subjection to them, and proclaims Fire and Sword to all that stand out, this Saints and Sinners, Good Men and Bad, do sufficiently experience.

Thales, one of the seven Sages, used to say, that few Tyrants lived to be old, but it is far otherwise with this Tyrant Sin.

Sin is a Tyrant, of many thousand years standing, and though it hath had many a wound, and many a foil, and received much opposition, yet still it playes the Tyrant all the World over. Oh! the hearts that this Tyrant makes to ake, the souls that this Tyrant makes to bleed.

Prov. 4. 16.

Pharaoh's Tyranny was nothing to sins Tyranny, this Tyrant will not so much as suffer his slaves to sleep, they sleep not except they have done mischief, and their sleep is taken away unless they cause some to fall. The wicked are like the troubled Sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. *There is no peace to the wicked, saith my God.*

Isa. 57. 20, 21.

Other Tyrants have been brought

brought down, and brought under by a humane power, but this cannot but by a Divine; the power of man hath brought down many of the Tyrants of this world, but it is only the power of Christ that can bring down this Tyrant, that can cast down his strong holds, 2 *Cor.* 10. 3, 4, 5, 6, *&c.* therefore engage Christ in the conflict, draw him into the battle, and in the end the conquest will be yours.

Vitellius, who had been Emperour of all the World, yet was driven thorow the streets of *Rome* stark naked, and thrown into the River *Tyber*, *&c.*

Andronicus the Emperour, for his cruelty towards his people, was by them at last shamefully deposed, and after many contumelies, hanged up by the heels.

Ptolomy was put on a Cross, *Bajazet* in an Iron Cage, *Phocas* broken on the Wheel, *Lycaon* cast to the Dogs (as well as *Jezabel*) *Attalus* thrust into a Forge, King *Gath* into a beer-barrel, *&c.* But none

of

of these that have tamed these Tyrants, that have brought down these mighty *Nimrods*, have been able to tame, to bring under the Tyrants, the sins, the lusts that have been in their own bosoms; many a man hath had a hand in bringing down of worldly Tyrants, who notwithstanding have died for ever from the hand of a Tyrant within, &c.

CHAP. VIII.

AND thus much for the Directions that young men must follow, if they would be good betimes, if they would seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of their days. I shall now give some brief Answers to the young mans Objections, and the old mans Scruples, and so close up this Discourse.

Object. 1.

But some young men may object and say, you would have us to be good betimes

times, and to seek and serve the Lord in the Primrose of our days; but it may be time enough hereafter to follow this counsel; we are young, and it may be time enough for us to mind these things hereafter, when we have satisfied the flesh so and so; or when we have got enough of the world, and laid up something that will stand us in stead, and that may oyl our joynts when we are old. Now,

To this Objection I answer,

First, That it is the greatest folly and madness in the world, to put off God and the great things of eternity with may-bees; what Trades-man, what Merchant, what Mariner, so mad, so foolish, so blockish, as to put off a present season, a present opportunity of profit and advantage, upon the account of a may-bee? It may be I may have as good a season, it may be I shall have as golden an opportunity to get and to inrich my self as this is; and therefore farewel to this. No men that are in their right minds will

argue

argue thus; and why then should you, especially in the things that are of an everlasting concernment to you?

I have read of one *Monarcho*, a Frantick *Italian*, who thought that all the Kings of the Earth were his Vassals; and as Frantick are they who wilfully neglect present seasons of Grace, upon the account of a future may-be, &c.

Secondly, I answer, it may be if thou neglectest this present season and opportunity of grace, thou mayest never have another; it may be mercy may never knock more if thou dost not now open, it may be Christ shall never be offered to thee more, if now thou dost not close with him, and accept of him; it may be the Spirit will never strive more with thee, if now thou dost resist him, and withstand him; it may be a pardon shall never be offered to thee more, if now thou wilt not take it; it may be the Gospel shall never sound more in thy ears, if now

Young men, if you will but go into burial places, you shall find graves exactly of your length.

ow thou wilt not hear it: now ſet
ne may-be againſt another may-
e, ſet Gods may-be againſt thine
wn may-be. But,

Thirdly, Doubtleſs there are
many thouſand thouſands now in
ell, who have pleaſed them-
lves, and put off God and the
aſons of Grace with a may-be,
hereafter may be time enough;
t may be when I have gratified
uch a luſt, and when I have trea-
ured ſo much of the World, I
will return, and ſeek, and ſerve
he Lord; but before ever this
aſon or opportunity come, Ju-
ice hath cut the thread of their
ives, and they are now miſerable
or ever; and now they are ſtill a
urſing themſelves, becauſe they
ave ſlipt their golden opportu-
ities upon the account of a may-
e, &c.

Fourthly and laſtly, This put-
ing off of God, and the preſent
aſons of Grace with a may-be,
very provoking to God; as
ou may ſee, if you will but read
from

It was an unſpeakable vexation to King *Lyſimachus*, that his laying to drink one draught of water, loſt him his Kingdom.

from the twentieth verse to the three and thirty of the first of *Proverbs*. Nothing stirs and provokes a Master more than his Servants putting off his service or his commands with a may-be, it may be I will, it may be I may do this and that; nothing puts a Master sooner into a heat, a flame, than this; nor nothing puts God more into a flame than this, as you may see by comparing *Psal.* 95. *ver.* 6. to the end, with that third of the *Hebrews*, and the 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. read the words, and tremble at the thoughts, of a may-be, at the thoughts of putting off of God, and the seasons of grace.

I have read of two, who cut off their right hands one for another, and then made it an excuse, a put off they were lame, and so could not serve in the Galleys of *Francis* the first, King of *France*, but this practice of theirs did so incense and provoke the King, that he sent them both to the Gallows.

I ſuppoſe the Reader is not ſo
ung, but knows how to apply
.

Object. 2.

*If I ſhould begin to be good be-
imes, and to ſeek and ſerve the Lord
the ſpring and morning of my days,
ſhould loſe my friends, I ſhould loſe
eir favour, for they are carnal and
rldly, and had rather I ſhould ſeek
er Gold, than God, the Creature,
an Chriſt, Earth, than Heaven,*
.

Now to this I anſwer, Surely
ou are out; for,

Firſt, This is the high way, the
adieſt way to gain the beſt, the
reſt, and the ſoundeſt friends;
hen a mans ways pleaſe the Lord,
e maketh even his enemies to be at
ace with him. When a man falls in
ith God, God will work the crea-
ures to fall in with him: *Joſeph*
ound it ſo, and *Jacob* found it ſo,
d *Job* found it ſo, the three Chil-
ren found it ſo, and *Daniel* found
it

Prov. 16. 7.
Job 5. 23.
to 28.

it so, as you all know that have but read one Scripture, and many in this age (as bad as it is) have found that the best way to make friends, is first, to make God our Friend. Ah! young men, young men, you shall not lose your friends (by seeking and serving the Lord in the Spring and Morning of your days) but only exchange bad ones for good ones, the worst for the best; he that gives up himself betimes to the Lord shall have God for his friend, and Christ for his friend, and the Angels for his friends, and the Saints for his friends; Christ will be to such,

Luk 15. 7.
Isa. 10. 6, 7, 8, 9.
Heb. 4. 14.
Isa. 59. 16, 17. ch. 44. 24.
Mal. 3. 6.
Psal. 121. 4, 5.

First, *An Omnipotent Friend.*
Secondly, *An Omniscient friend.*
Thirdly, *An Omni present friend.*
Fourthly, *An Indeficient friend.*
Fifthly, *An Independent friend.*
Sixthly, *An Immutable friend.*
Seventhly, *A Watchful friend.*
Eighthly, *A Loving friend.*
Ninthly, *A Faithful friend.*
Tenthly, *A Compassionate friend.*
Eleventhly, *A Close friend.*

There

There is a friend that sticketh closer than a Brother, Prov. 18. 24. Such a friend is Christ, and such a friend is as ones own soul, and a rare happiness, hardly to be match'd.

1 Joh. 4. 16. Tit. 1. 2. Isa. 63. 9.

Twelfthly, *An universal friend*, a friend in all cases, and a friend in all places. Christ is so a friend to every one of his, as if he were a friend to none besides: Hence it is that they say, not only, our Lord, our God, but my Lord, and my God; Christ is such an universal friend, as that he supplies the place, and acts the part of every friend.

Luke 1. 43. Joh. 20. 28. Phil. 4. 19. Joh. 13. 1.

Thirteenthly, *He is our best friend*. Psal. 90. 1. before we had a friend in all the world, he was our friend, Prov. 8. 21.

Alexander the Great cannot cut that knot of friendship that is tyed betwixt Christ and his

Lastly, *He is a constant friend; Whom he loves, he loves to the end.*

Augustus Cæsar would not suddenly entertain a League of friendship with any, but was a constant friend to those he loved (*amare nec cito desisto, nec temere incipio*) nec ere I love, as long ere I leave; Where

Where Christ begins to love, he always loves, *Jer.* 31. 3. *I have loved thee with an everlasting love.* Now who would not venture the loss of all friends in the world, to gain such a friend as this is?

Ah! Young men and women let me say to you, what *Seneca* said to his friend *Polybius* (*Fas tibi non est de fortuna conqueri, salvo Cæsare*) never complain of thy hard fortune, as long as *Cæsar* is thy friend: so say I, never complain of your loss of friends, so long as by losing of them, you gain Christ to be your friend.

Secondly, Thou wert better be without their friendship and favour than to enjoy it upon any sinful and unworthy accounts, thou wert better run the hazard of losing their friends, and their favour, by seeking and serving the Lord in the Primrose of thy days, than to run the hazard of losing God, Christ, Heaven, eternity, and thy soul for ever, by neglecting the things of thy peace. It was a gallant return which the noble

Mat. 16. 26
Mar. 8. 46.

ble *Sutilius* made his friend, re-
ſting of him an unlawful favour,
ſuch language as this, I had as
od be without ſuch a friend, as
ith him, who will not let me
eed in what I ask; to whom he
plied, I can want ſuch a friend
you, if for your ſake I muſt do
at that is not honeſt. The Ap-
lication is eaſie.

Well, young men, remember this;
he torments of a thouſand Hells,
ere there ſo many, comes far
ort of this one voice, to be turned
t of Gods preſence with a (*Non* Mat. 7. 23.
vi vos) I know you not.

Ah! Young man, young man,
ou wert better ten thouſand
houſand times to be caſt out of
he thoughts and hearts of thy car-
al friends and relations, than to
caſt out of Gods preſence with
uſed *Cain* for ever, than to be ex- Gen. 4.
mmunicated out of the general Heb. 12. 23.
ſembly of the Saints, and Con-
egation of the firſt-born, which
e written in Heaven: and there-
e away with this objection. But

Third-

Thirdly, The favour and friendship of such carnal persons, is very fickle and inconstant, it is very fading and withering. Now they stroke, and anon they strike; now they lift up, and anon they cast down; now they smile, and anon they frown; now they kiss, and anon they kill; now they cry *Hosanna*, *Hosanna*, and anon they cry, crucifie him, crucifie him. *Haman* is one day feasted with the King, and the next day made a feast for Crows; the Princes of *Babylon* were highly in King *Darius* his favour one day, and cast into the Lyons Den the next; the Scribes and Pharisees that cried up *Judas* one day, did in effect, bid him go and hang himself the next day.

Such mens favours and friendship are as *Venice* Glasses, quickly broken, and therefore not much to be prized or minded. Histories abound with instances of this nature; but I must hasten, only remembring this, that every days experience tells us, that wicked men ca-

Esth. 7.

Dan. 6. Mat. 27.

3, 4, 5. *Valerian*, *Valens*, *Belliz-arius*, *Bajazet*, *Pythias*, *Dionysius* *Pompey*, *William* the Conquerour, and many others have found it so.

can soon turn Tables, and cross their *Books*; their favour and friendship is usually like to a morning cloud, or like to *Jonahs* Gourd, one hour flourishing, and the next hour withering; and why then shouldest thou set thy heart upon that which is more changeable than the Moon? But,

Fourthly and lastly, Who but a mad man would adventure the loss of the Kings *favour*, to gain the *favour* of his Page? who but a stark *Bedlam* would run the hazard of losing the Judges favour upon the Bench, to purchase the good-will of the Prisoner at the Bar?

Socrates preferred the Kings Countenance before his Coin; and so must you prefer the favour of *God*, the countenance of *Christ* and the things of eternity, above all the favour and friendship of all the men in the *world*: when your neerest friends, and deerest relations stand in competition with Christ, or the things above, you must shake them off; you must turn *your*

Glaucus who changed his Armour of Gold with *Diomedes*, for his Armor of Brass, stands upon record for a Fool.

Psal. 4. 6, 7.

Psal. 45. 10 Mat. 10. 37 Luke 14. 26, 27.

backs upon them, and welcome Christ, and the things of your peace; he that forsakes all relations for Christ, shall certainly find all relations in Christ, he will be father, friend, husband, child; he will be every thing to thee, who takest him for thy great All.

Object. 3.

I, but I shall meet with many reproaches from one and another, if I should labour to be good betimes, if I should seek and serve the Lord in the spring and morning of my youth.

Now to this I answer,

First, What are reproaches to the great things that others have suffered for Christ, his Gospel, and the maintaining of a good Conscience? what is a prick of a pin to a stab at the heart? what is a chiding to a hanging, a whipping to a burning? no more are all the reproaches thou canst meet with to the great things that others have suffered for Christs sake.

Hebrews, ch. 10. 11. Read the ten Persecutions.

Ah! Young men, you should be like the *Scythian* that went naked in

in the Snow, and when *Alexander* wondred how he could endure it, answered, *I am not ashamed, for I am all forehead.*

So should you, in the cause and way of Christ, you should not be asham'd, you should be all forehead, you should be stout and bold.

Calonus the Dutch Martyr, under all his reproaches, called to the Judge that had sentenced him to death, and desired him to lay his hand upon his heart, and then asked him, whose heart did most beat; his or the Judges; all the reproaches in the world should not so much as make a Christians heart beat, they should not in the least trouble him, nor disturb him; But,

Secondly, I answer, that all the reproaches thou meetest with in the way of Christ, and for the sake of Christ, they do but add pearls to thy Crown, they are all additions to thy happiness and blessedness. If ye be reproached for the Name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of Glory, and of God, rest- 1 Pet. 4. 14

eth upon you: on their part, he is evil spoken of, but on your part, he is glorified; the more you are reproach'd for Christs sake on earth, the greater shall be your reward in Heaven; they that are most loaded with reproaches here, shall be most loaded with glory hereafter. Christ hath written their names in golden letters in his book of Life, that are written in black letters of reproach for his sake on Earth. 'Twas a good saying of one, *A reproacher* (saith he) *is beneath a man, but the Reproached, that bear it well are equal to Angels:* of all Crowns, the Reproached mans Crown, will weigh heaviest in Heaven. But,

Mat. 5. 11, 12.

Chrysost.

So was *Joseph*, *Mephibosheth*, *Naboth*: and in latter times *Luther*, who with y said died despairing when he

Thirdly, I answer, the best men have been most reproached, *David* was, *Psal.* 69. 7. *Psal.* 89. 50. *Psal.* 119. 22. *Psal.* 31. 11. *Psal.* 109. 25. And *Job* was, *Job* 19. 35.

was alive to confute it. And that *Beza* ran away with another mans Wife. And that *Calvin* was branded on the shoulder for a Rogue; but there would be no end of this theme, should I say all that might be said.

ch. 20.

eb. 20. 3. *Job* 16. 10. And *Jeremiah* was, *Jer.* 20. 7, 10. yea, this hath been the common *portion* of the people of God in all Ages of the World, in *Nehemiahs* time it was so, *Neh* 1. 3. *And they said unto me, the remnant that are left of the captivity, are in great affliction & reproach.* In *Davids* time it was so, *Psal.* 79. 4. and *Psal.* 44. 13, 14 and in *Jeremiahs* time it was so, *Lam.* 5. 1. *Remember, O Lord, what is come upon us; consider and behold our reproach.* And in *Daniels* time it was so, *Dan.* 9. 16 *Thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us.* And it was so in the Apostles time, *Rom.* 3. 8. *And not rather as we be slanderously reported,* as some affirm that we say, let us do evil that good may come, whose damnation is just, 2 *Cor.* 6. 8. *By honour and dishonour; by evil report, and good report, as deceivers, and yet true:* so in that, 1 Tim. 4. 10. *For therefore we both labour and suffer Reproach because we trust in the living God,* &c. And it was so in the Primitive

times, for when the Christians met together before Sun to pray, the Heathens reported of them, that they worshipped the Sun, and aspired after Monarchy, and committed adulteries, and unnatural uncleannesses. Now who is troubled, who complains of that which is a common lot, as cold, winter, sickness, death, *&c.* No more should any complain of reproaches, it being the common lot of the people of God in all ages; yea, Christ himself was sadly reproached, falsly accused, and strangely traduced, disgraced, and scandalized; he was called a Glutton, a Drunkard, a friend of Publicans and sinners, and judged to use the Black Art, casting out Devils by *Beelzebub* the Prince of Devils; Christ hath suffered the greatest, and the worst reproaches, why then should you be afraid to wear that Crown of Thorns that Christ hath wore before you? There is a great truth in what he said, (*Non potest qui pati timet, ejus esse qui passus est*) he that

Mat. 9. 34 ch. 12. 24

Tertul. ad fuga in persecut.

that is afraid to suffer, cannot be his Disciple, who suffered so much; if the Master had been marked with a black coal, let not the servant think to go free. I am heartily angry (saith *Luther*) with those that speak of my sufferings, which if compared with that which Christ suffered for me, are not once to be mentioned in the same day; But,

Fourthly, I answer, that all reproaches shall at last be arraigned at the highest Bar of Justice, for all the reproaches that they have cast upon the people of God.

They think it strange, (or they think it a new world) that you run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you: who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.

1 Pet. 4 4 Ξενίζονται βλασφημοῦντες, Wonder and blasphem:.

I am in an extasie, (saith *Picus Mirandula*) to think how prophane men rail upon those now, whom one day they will wish they had *imitated*. It was excellent *Counsel* that the Heathen Orator gave

cic. 4. in Verr.

his Hearers (*Ita vivamus ut rationem nobis reddendam arbitremur*) let us live, as those that must give an account of all at last.

St. *Chrysostom* brings in Christ comforting his Disciples against *Reproaches*, speaking thus unto them; *What is the wrong, grievous to you, That now they call you Seducers and Conjurers? it will not be long before they shall openly call you the Saviours and Blessings of the whole world: that time that shall declare all things that are now hid, shall rebuke them for their laying words against you, and shall kindle the splendour of your vertue; So they shall be found lyers, evil-speakers, false accusers of others; but you shall be more clear and illustrious than the Sun, and you shall have all men witnesses of your Glory.* Such as wisely and humbly bear reproaches now, shall judge reproachers at last. But,

Isa. 3. 17 Mic. 7. 9, 10, 11. 1 Cor. 6. 3, 4.

Fifthly, I answer, That God doth many times, even in this life, bear sad witness and testimony against the reproachers of his people; *I will bless*

bleſs them that bleſs thee, and I will curſe them that curſe thee; God will even in this life curſe them with a witneſs, who curſe them that he bleſſeth. *Pharaoh* found it ſo, and *Saul* found it ſo, and *Jezabel* found it, ſo, and *Haman* found it ſo, and the Princes of *Babylon* found it ſo, and the *Jews* find it ſo to this very day.

Gen. 12. 3. 2 Sam. 16. 11, 12, 13. Divine Juſtice is like *Vulcans* Iron-Net, that took the Gods, it apprehends and condemns all that are reproachers and enemies to his people.

And O! the dreadful judgements and curſes that God hath poured out upon the Reproachers of his Name, of his Son, of his Spirit, of his Word, of his Ordinances, and of his People, in theſe days wherein we live. I might give you many ſad *inſtances* of ſuch in our days, whoſe feet juſtice hath taken in the ſnare, men of abſtracted conceits, and ſublime ſpeculations, and indeed ſuch uſually prove the great wiſe Fools, who like the Lark, ſoaring higher and higher, peering, and peering till at length they fall into the Net of the Fowler; and no wonder, for ſuch perſons uſually are as

censorious as they are curious.

Sixthly, I answer, S. *Paul* rejoyced more in his *suffering* reproaches for Christs sake, than he did in his being wrapt up in the third Heaven, 2 *Cor.* 12. 10. *Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christs sake, for when I am weak, then am I strong.* And therefore you have him often singing this Song, *I Paul a Prisoner of Jesus Christ:* not I *Paul* wrapp'd up into the third Heaven: He look'd upon all his sufferings, as Gods love-tokens, he look'd upon all *reproaches*, as pledges and badges of Son ship; and therefore joys and glories under all. Christ shewed his love to him, in wrapping him up in the third Heaven, and he shewed his love to *Christ*, in his joyful bearing of *reproaches* for his sake. S. *Paul* rattles his Chain (which he bears for the Gospel) and was proud of it, as a Woman of her Ornaments, saith *Chrysostom.*

(*Crudelitas vestra gloria nostra*) your cruelty is our glory, said they in *Tertull.* fire, sword, prison, famine, are all delightful to me, saith *Basil.*

Now why should that be matter of

of trouble and discouragement to you, that was matter of joy and rejoycing to him? shall he look upon reproaches as a Crown of Honour, and will you look upon reproaches as a Crown of Thorns?

O! look upon reproach, as a Royal Diadem, look upon it as Christs Livery, and count it your highest ambition in the world, to wear this Livery for his sake, who once wore a Crown of Thorns for your sakes. When *Babylas* was to die, he required this favour, to have his Chains buried with him, as the Ensigns of his Honour; But,

Seventhly, I answer, That by a wise and gracious behaviour, under the reproaches thou meetest with for *Christ's* sake, thou mayest be instrumental to win others to *Christ*.

It was a notable saying of *Luther*, (*Ecclesia totum mundum convertit sanguine & oratione*) the Church converteth the whole World by Blood and Prayer.

Divers have been won to Christ, by beholding the *gracious carriages* of

Sufferings are the ensigns of heavenly Nobility, saith *Calvin*.

It was an observation of Mr. *John Lindsy*, that the very smoak of Mr. *Hamilton*, converted as many as it blew upon.

of Christians under their sufferings and reproaches for Christ.

We read of *Cicilia*, a poor Virgin, who by her gracious behaviour under all her sufferings and reproaches for Christ, was the means of converting four hundred to Christ.

Adrianus beholding the gracious chearful carriages of the Martyrs, under all their sufferings and reproaches, was converted to Christ, and afterwards suffered Martyrdom for Christ.

See also the History of the Council of *Trent*. 418. 2. Edit.

Justin Martyr was also converted, by observing the holy and chearful behaviour of the Saints, under all their sufferings and reproaches for Christ. During the Cruel Persecutions of the Heathen Emperours, the Christian Faith was spread thorow all places of the Empire, because the oftner they were mown down, (saith *Tertullian*) the more they grew.

And St. *Augustin* observed, that though there were many thou-

sands

sands put to death for professing Christ; yet they were never the fewer for being slain.

Ah! Young men, you may by a wise and gracious bearing of reproaches for Christ, be instrumental to win others to Christ; and therefore never plead there is a Lion in the way: but I must hasten: and therefore in the Eighth and

Last place, consider how bravely several of the very Heathens have bore reproaches, and let that provoke you in the face of all *Reproaches*, to seek and serve the Lord in the morning of your youth, &c.

When *Demosthenes* was reproached by one, I will not, saith he, strive with thee in this kind of fight, in which he that is overcome is the better man.

When one came and reproached *Xenophon* (says he) *You have learned how to reproach, and I have learned how to bear reproach.*

And *Aristippus* (the Philosopher) said, *You are fit to cast reproaches, and I am fit to bear reproaches.*

De-

Demochares, an *Athenian* Orator, was sent to King *Philip* as Embassadour, *Philip* asked him how he might pleasure the *Athenians*; forsooth, saith he, *If you will hang your selfe*. The Prince patiently sent him home again, and bid him ask whether were more noble, the patient hearer, or venturer of such unseemly language.

When one wondred at the patience of *Socrates*, towards one who reviled and reproached him; if we should meet one, saith he, whose body were more unsound than ours, should we be angry with him, & not rather pity him? why then should we not do the like to him, whose soul is more diseased than others?

Augustus Cæsar (in whose time Christ was born) bid *Catullus* the railing Poet to Supper, to shew that he had forgiven him.

Plutarch in vita Peric.

It is a notable example that we find of one *Pericles*, who as he was sitting with others in a great meeting, a foul-mouthed Fellow bitterly

bitterly reproached him, and railed all the day long upon him, and at night when it was dark, and the meeting up, the Fellow followed him and railed at him, even to his door, and he took no notice of him, but when he came at home, this is all he said, *Friend, it is dark, I pray let my Man light you home.*

Themistocles professed, that if two ways were shewed him, one to Hell, and the other to the Bar, he would chuse that which went to Hell, and forsake the other.

Josephus, reports of that *Herod* that is made mention of in *Acts* 12. 13. that when one *Simon* a Lawyer had grievously reproached and scandaliz'd him before the people, he sent for him, and caused him to sit down next to him, and in a kind manner he spoke thus to him; *Tell me I pray thee, what thing thou findest fault worthy, or contrary to the Law in me? Simon*, not having any thing to answer, besought him to pardon him, which the King did, and was friends with him, and dismissed him, and bestowed gifts on him.

Ah! Young men, young men, shall the very Heathen make nothing

thing of reproaches, ſhall they bear up ſo prudently and bravely under the greateſt loads of reproaches, and will not you? will not you, who in your Light, in your Mercies, and in all Goſpel Engagements, are ſo highly advanced above them? Oh that none of them may be called to the Bar in the great day, to witneſs againſt any of you, into whoſe hands this Treatiſe ſhall fall! and ſo much by way of anſwer to the third Objection. But,

Object. 4.

Fourthly, The young man objects and ſays, *You preſs us to be good betimes, and to ſeek and ſerve the Lord in the ſpring and morning of our days; but we obſerve that moſt men mind not theſe things, but rather give liberty to themſelves, to walk in ways that are moſt pleaſing to the fleſh, and why then ſhould we be ſingular and nice, we were better do as the moſt do, &c.* Now to this I anſwer.

1. That though bad examples are dan-

dangerous to all, yet usually they prove most dangerous and pernicious to young persons, who are more easily drawn to follow *Examples* than *Precepts*, especially those Examples that tend most to undo them, 2 *Kin.* 15. 9. It is said of *Zachariah* the King of *Israel*, *That he did evil in the sight of the Lord as his Fathers had done, he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam*, he would be as his Father was, and do as his Father did, whatever came on it.

Præcepta docent, exempla movent, Precepts may instruct, but examples do perswade.

So the *Samaritans*, of whom it is said, 2 *King.* 17. 41. *These Nations feared the Lord* (that is, they made some kind of profession of the true Religion, as the Ten Tribes had done) *and served their Graven Images* (too) *both their Children, and their childrens children* (did thus) *as did their Fathers, so do they unto this day*: By evil examples they were both drawn to Idolatry, and rooted and confirmed in it; so the main reason why the Kingdom and Church of *Judah* were so setled in their Idolatry, that there was no

no hope of reclaiming them, was this, that their Children remembred their Altars and their Groves by the green Trees upon the high Hills, *Jer.* 17. 1, 2. Tinder is not apter to take fire, nor wax the impression of the seal, nor paper the ink, than youth is to follow ill examples.

You may see in *Radbod* King of *Phrysia*, who coming to the Font to be baptized, asked what was become of his Ancestors? answer was made, that they died in a fearful state unbaptized; he replied, that he would rather perish with the multitude, than go to Heaven with a few.

Æthiopians lame themselves if their King be lame, saith *Diodorus*. *Elian* reports, that there was a Whore that did boast, that

I remember the Heathen brings in a young man, who hearing of the adulteries and wickednesses of the Gods, said, *What! do they so! and shall I stick at it? No, I will not.* Sinful examples are very drawing, and very encouraging, many have found it so to their eternal undoing; those that have no ears to hear what you say, have many eyes

to

to see what you do. Bad Princes make bad subjects; bad Masters make bad Servants; bad Parents make bad children, and bad Husbands make bad wives; it is easier for the bad to corrupt the good, than for the good to convert the bad; it is easier to run down the Hill with company, than to run up the Hill alone.

I would desire all young men often to remember that saying of *Lactantius* (*Qui malum imitatur, bonus esse non potest*) he who imitates the bad, cannot be good. Young men, in these professing times, stand between good and bad examples, as *Hercules* in his dream, stood between Vertue and Vice, sollicited by both; chuse you must who to follow: Oh! that you were all so wise, as to follow the best; as a woman that hath many suiters, is very careful to take the best: so should you; Life, Heaven, Happiness, Eternity hangs upon it.

But before I come to the second answer, let me leave this note, or no-

she could easily get Scholars away from *Socrates*; but *Socrates* could get away no Scholars from her.

Sin is bad in the eye, worse in the tongue worser in the heart, but worst of all in the life, end that because it then indangers other mens souls, as well as a mans own.

notion, with those who make no Conscience of undoing others by their Examples, (*viz.*)

That a more grievous punishment is reserved for them who cause others to offend, than for them which sin by their Occasion or Example.

Thus the Serpent was punished more than *Eve*, and *Eve* more than *Adam*.

So *Jezabel* felt a greater and sorer Judgment than *Ahab*. To sin (saith one) hath not so much perdition in it, as to cause others to sin. Friends, you have sins enough of your own, to make you for ever miserable, why should you by giving bad examples to others, make your selves more miserable? the lowest, the darkest, the hottest place in Hell will be for them that have *drawn others* thither by their Example. *Dives* knew, that if his Brethren were damned, he should be double damned, because he had largely contributed to the bringing of them to Hell by his wicked example; and therefore he de-

Mat. 23. 15.

Luk. 16. 28.

desires that they might be kept out of Hell, (not out of any love, or good will to them) but because their coming thither would have made his Hell more hot, his Torments more insufferable; But,

Secondly, I answer, *If you sin with others, you shall suffer with others.* If you will partake of other mens sins, you shall also partake of others mens plagues. They that have been (like *Simeon* and *Levi*) brethren in iniquity, they shall be brethren in misery, they that have sinned together impenitently, shall be sent to Hell joyntly, they shall perish together *eternally*. If you will needs be companions with others in their sins, you shall be sure to be companions with them in their sorrows. The old World sin'd together, and are drowned together; the *Sodomites* burning in lusts together, were burnt with fire and brimstone together, *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, they sin together, they murmur and provoke the Lord together, and the earth opens her

Rev. 18. 4. *Non minus ardebit, qui cum multis ardebit, Aug.* He burns no less, that burns with company.

Gen. 6.
Gen. 19.

Numb. 16. 26,—34.

her mouth, and swallows them up together. Exod. 14. *Pharaoh* and his Host pursue *Israel* together, and they are drown'd in the Sea together. Numb. 25. *Zimri* and *Cosbi* committed folly, uncleanness together, and *Phineas* stabs them both together. The Hebrew Doctors have a very pretty parable to this purpose; A man planted an *Orchard*, and going from home, was careful to leave such Watchmen as might both keep it from strangers, and not deceive him themselves; therefore he appointed one blind, but strong of his limbs, and the other seeing, but a Cripple. These two in their Masters absence conspired together; and the blind took the lame on his shoulders, and so gather'd the fruit; their Master returning, and finding out their subtilty, punisheth them both together.

So will Justice deal with you at last, who sin with others; therefore take heed, young men, of doing as others do; But,

Thirdly, I answer, *You must not live*

live by examples, but by precepts; you are not to look so much at what others do, as at what God requires you to do: *Exod.* 23. 2. *Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil, neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment.* Ro. 12. 2. *Fashion not your selves like unto this world*; that is, do not fashion and conform your selves to the corrupt customs and courses of wretched wordlings, who have made gold their God, and gain their glory, the running cross to a divine command, cost the young Prophet his life (though he did it under pretence of revelation from God) as you may see in that sad story, 1 *King.* 13. *ch. &c.* (*Non parentum, aut majorum auctoritas, sed Dei docentis imperium*) the command of God must out-weigh all authority and example of men.

Obedientia non discutit Dei mandata, sed facit. Prosp.

Hieron.

And we must be as careful in the keeping of a light Commandment, as an heavy *Commandment*, saith a *Rabbi*: Divine Commands must be obeyed against all contrary

ry reasonings, wranglings and examples. St. *Augustine* brings in some excusing their compliance with the sinful customes and examples of those times, in drinking healths, thus, Great Personages urged it, and it was at the Kings Banquet, where they judged of Loyalty by Luxury, and put us upon this Election; Drink or die, the not drinking of a health, had been our death; he gives this answer, that God who sees that for love to him, and his Commands, thou wouldest not conform to their drunken customs, will give thee favour in their eyes, who thus threatned thee to drink.

The complaint is ancient in *Seneca*, that commonly men live not *ad rationem*, but *ad similitudinem* *Seneca de vita beata, c.* 1.

Ah! Young men, you that dote so much upon examples now, will find that a stinging, terrifying question, when put home by God, or Conscience, *Who hath required these things at your hands?* Isa. 1. 12. But,

Fourthly, I Answer, *Company and Allurements to sin will be found no sufficient excuse for sin.*

Gen 3. If *Eve* lay her fault on the Serpent

pent, and *Adam* lay his on *Eve*, God will take it off, and lay the curse on both. *Saul's* Provocation by his people (and by *Samuels* long stay) to offer Sacrifice, would not bear him out, but for his disobedience, he must lose both his Crown and Life. The young man in the *Proverbs*, though tempted and sollicited by the Harlot, yet he hath a Dart struck thorow his heart; though *Jonah* did please Gods gracious inclinations to shew mercy, and his fear of being disproved; yea, and though he might have pleaded his fear of cruel and savage usage from the *Ninevites* (whose hearts were desperately set upon wickedness) and his despair of ever doing good upon a people so blinded and hardened; and that they were *Gentiles*, and he a *Jew*; and why should he then be sent with so strange, so terrible a message to such a people, nothing being more hateful and distasteful to a Jewish palate: but all these pleas and excuses will not

1 Sam. 15. 14, 15, 26, 27.

Prov. 7. 14, 15, 21.

Oculos quos peccatum claudit, æna aperit, Greg. The eyes that sin shut, affliction opens, and *Jonah* found it so

bear off the blow; *Jonah* must into the Sea for all this, yea, he must to the bottom of Hell, as himself phrases it. It is in vain for the bird to complain, that it saw the corn, but not the Pit-fall, or for a fish to plead it saw the bait, but not the hook. So it will be in vain, for sinners at last when they are taken in an infernal Pit fall, to plead Company and Allurements by which they have been enticed to undo their souls for ever.

Dionysius the *Sicilian* King, to excuse himself from the present delivery of the golden Garment he took from his God *Apollo*, answered, that such a Robe as that was, could not be at any season of the year useful to his God, for it would not keep him warm in the winter, and it was too heavy for the Summer, and so put off his Idol-god; but the *God of Spirits, the God of all flesh*, will not be put off with any *excuses* or *pretences*, when he shall try, and judge the children of men: But,

Fifthly, and lastly, I answer, That it

it is a very great judgment to be given up to follow evil examples: a man given up to evil examples, is a man sadly left of God, wofully blinded by Satan, and desperately hardened in sin; it speaks a man ripe for wrath, for Ruine, for Hell, *Jer.* 6. 11. * *Behold, I will lay stumbling blocks before this people, & the Fathers and the Sons together, shall fall upon them; the neighbour & his friend shall perish.* Oh! it is a dreadful thing when God shall make the sinful examples of others to be stumbling blocks to a people, at which they shall stumble and fall, and perish for ever; good had it bin for such persons that they had never been born; as Christ once spake concerning *Judas*.

The *Rhodians* & *Lydians* enacted several *Laws*, that those Sons which followed not their Fathers in their Vertues, but followed vicious examples, should be disinherited, and their Lands given to the most vertuous of that race, not admitting any impious Heir whatsoever to inherit; and do you think that God

* This particle behold is sometimes a note of derision, Gen. 3. 22. 2. A note of attention often, Isa. 28 6. Mal. 1. 1. Luk. 1. 20. 3. A note of admiration often. 4. A note of asseveration. 5. A note of castigation; in all the sences we may take it here. *Mart.*

will not disinherit all those of heaven and happiness, who follow vicious Examples? Doubtless he will, 1 Cor. 10. 5--- 12.

Object. 5.

The Fifth and last Objection (I shall mention) is this, *God is a God of mercy, in him are bowels of mercy, yea, a Sea, an Ocean of mercy, he loves mercy, he delights in mercy, and he is ready to shew mercy to poor sinners, when they are even at the last cast, when there is but a short stride between them and the Grave, between them & Eternity, as we see in his extending mercy to the Thief, and in his giving a pardon into his hand, and the assurance of Paradise into his bosom, when he was ready to be turned off the ladder of life, & therefore I may spend the Primrose of my days in following sin & the delights, profits, vanities, & contents of this world, & at last cast, I may have mercy as well as the Thief God is a God made up of mercy, and surely he will not deny some crums of mercy to poor sinners in misery, &c.*

Now to this Objection, I shall give

give these following Answers.

First *God is as just as he is merciful*, witness his casting the Angels out of Heaven, and *Adam* out of Paradise; witness all the Threatnings, the Curses, the Woes that the Bible is filled with, from one end to the others; witness the Hell, the Horror, the Terror, & Amazement that he raised in the Consciences of sinnes; witness the devastations that he hath made of the most stately flourishing Towns, Cities, Countrys, and Kingdoms, that have been in all the World, witness the variety of diseases, calamities, miseries, dangers, deaths, and Hell, that always attend the inhabitants of the world; but above all, witness Christs treading the Wine-press of his Fathers Wrath, witness his hiding his face from him, and the pouring out of all his displeasure and vengeance on him.

God is as well all hard to punish, as he is all grace to pardon.

Zeleucus the *Locrensian* Law-giver, thrust out one of his own Sons eyes, for his transgressing of a wholsom Law which he had enacted;

ed; but God the Father thrust out both Christs eyes for our transgressing of his Royal Law; Oh! the justice and severity of God. But,

Secondly, I answer, That there is not a greater evidence of blindness, prophaneness, hard-heartedness, spiritual madness, and hellish desperateness in all the world, than to make that an Argument, an incouragement to sin (*viz.* the mercy of God) which should be the greatest argument under heaven to keep a man from sin, as all know that have but read the Scripture: neither are there any sinners in the world, that God delights to rain Hell out of Heaven upon, as upon such, who by their abuse of mercy, turn the God of mercy into a God of clouts, and go on out-daring Justice it self, *Deut.* 24. 19, 20. *And it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless him in his heart, saying, I shall have peace (God is a God of mercy) though I walk in the imagination of my heart, to add drunkenness to thirst:*

Read Isa. 22. 12. to 16. and Ezek. 14. to. 15.

The

The Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord, and his jealousie, shall smoak against that man, and all the curses that are written in this Book, shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under Heaven. In these words you may observe, that God is absolute in threatning, to shew that he will be resolute in punishing. *Psal.* 11. 5, 6. *The wicked, and him that loveth iniquity doth his soul hate. Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire, & brimstone, and an horrible tempest; this shall be the portion of their cup.*

A lover of iniquity, is a liver in iniquity upon choice.

Ah! That all poor sinners would make these two Scriptures their companions, their constant bedfellows, till they are got above that sad temptation of turning the mercy of God into an incouragement to sin.

Whilst *Milo Crotoniates* was tearing asunder the stock of an Oak, his strength failing him, the cleft suddenly closing, he was held so fast by the hands, that he became a prey to the Beasts of the Field:

All the abuſers of mercy, will certainly and ſuddenly become a prey to the Juſtice of God, that will rend and tear them in pieces, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *Pſal.* 50. 22. *Wo, wo to the ſoul that fights againſt God with his own mercies*, that will be bad, becauſe he is good; that will be ſinful, becauſe he is merciful; that will turn all the kindneſſes of God (that ſhould be as ſo many ſilver Cords to tie him to Love and Obedience) into Arrows, and ſo ſhoot them back into the heart of God. Abuſed Mercy will at laſt turn into a Lion, a fierce Lion, and then wo to the abuſers and deſpiſers of it. But,

Exemplum latronis ſervati eſt admirandum, non ad imitandum.

Thirdly, In anſwer to that part of the Objection, concerning the Thief on the Croſs, I offer theſe things briefly to your thoughts.

1. *That as one was ſaved to teach ſinners not to deſpair, ſo another was damned, to teach them not to preſume.*

A pardon is ſometimes given to one upon the Gallows, but who ſo truſts to that, the Rope may be his hire.

hire. It is not good (saith one) to put it upon the Psalm of *miserere*; and the neck-verse; for sometimes he proves no Clerk, and so hangs for it.

2. It is an example without a Promise. Here is an Example of late Repentance; but where is there a Promise of late Repentance?

Oh! let not his late and sudden conversion, be to thee a temptation, till thou hast found a Promise for late and sudden Conversion; it is not Examples, but Promises that are Foundations for Faith to rest on; he that walks by an Example of Mercy, without a Precept to guide him, and a Promise to support him, walks but by a dark lanthorn that will deceive him; well, young man, remember this, Examples of Mercy encrease wrath, when the heart is not bettered by them. But,

3. This was a rare Miracle of mercy, with the glory whereof Christ did honour the ignominy of his Cross; and therefore we may as well look for another Cru-

cifying of Christ, as look for a sinners conversion, when he hath scarce time enough to reckon up all those particular duties which make up the integrity of its constitution. But,

4. I answer: This Thief knew not Christ before, he had not refused, neglected, or slighted Christ before; the Sermon on the Cross was the first Sermon that ever he heard Christ preach, and Christs prayer on the Cross was the first prayer that ever he heard Christ make; he knew not Christ till he met with him on the Cross (which proved to him a happy meeting) his case was as if a *Turk* or *Heathen* should now be converted to the Faith; and therefore thou hast little reason, Oh young man, to plead this example to keep Christ and thy soul asunder, who art every day under the call, the intreaties and wooings of Christ. But,

5. And lastly, I answer; The circumstances of time and place are rightly to be considered, Now when Christ was triumphing on the Cross

over

over *Sin*, *Satan*, and the *World*; when he had made the Devils a publick spectacle of scorn and derision, when he was taking his leave of the world, and entring into his Glory; Now he puts a pardon into the Thiefs hand, and crouds other favours and kindnesses upon him.

As in the *Roman* Triumphs, the *Victor* being ascended up to the Capitol in a Chariot of State, used to cast certain pieces of coyn among the people, for them to pick up, which he used not to do at other times: So our Lord Jesus Christ, in the day of his Triumph, and solemn inauguration into his heavenly Kingdom, scatters some Heavenly Jewels, that this Thief might pick up, which he doth not, nor will not do every day: or as in these days it is usual with Princes to save some notorious malefactors at their Coronation, when they enter upon their Kingdoms in Triumph, which they do not use to do afterwards; So did Jesus Christ carry it towards this Thief, but this is not his

his ordinary way of saving and bringing souls to Glory; and therefore do not, O young man, let not the Thiefs late conversion prove a temptation, or an occasion of thy delaying repentance, and trifling away the Primrose of thy days in vanity and folly. And thus much may suffice to have been spoken by way of answer to the Young mans Objections. I shall now speak a few words to Old men, and so close up. Now.

CHAP. IX.

IS it so commendable, so desirable, and so necessary for young men to be good betimes, to seek & serve the Lord in the Spring and Morning of their Youth, as hath bin sufficiently demonstrated in this Treatise? Oh then that I could so woo aged persons, as to win them (who yet have put off this great work) to seek and serve the Lord before their glass be out, their Sun set, and their Souls lost for ever.

Oh that that counsel of the Prophet

phet might take hold upon your hearts. *Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darkness, and before your foot stumble* (through age) *upon the dark Mountains; and while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness.*

I, but aged sinners may reply; *Is there any hope, any help for us?* is there any probability, is there any possibility that ever such as we are should return, and find mercy and favour with the Lord? we who have lived so long without him, we that have sinned so much against him, we that to this day are strangers to him, yea, in arms against him; is there any hope that we white-headed sinners, who have withstood so many thousand offers of Grace, and so many thousand motions of the Spirit, and so many thousand checks of conscience, and so many thousand tenders of Christ and Heaven, that ever we should obtain Mercy, that ever we should have our old hearts turned, our millions

lions of sins pardoned, our vile natures changed, and our poor souls saved?

I answer, that there is hope even for such as you are; all the Angels in heaven and all the men on earth, cannot tell, but that you, even you, may obtain mercy and favour, that your souls die not; with the Lord nothing is impossible, and for the grace of the Gospel nothing is too hard: Now this I make evident by an induction of particulars. Thus,

Mat. 20. 1. to 17. The *Roman* Penny was seven pence half-penny.

1. All were not called nor sent to work in the Vineyard at the first hour, some were called at the third hour, others at the sixth, others at the ninth, and some at the eleventh; God hath his several times of calling souls to himself: the eleventh hour was about five in the afternoon, an hour before Sun-set, when it was even time to leave work; and yet at this hour some were called, imployed, and rewarded with the rest.

Some of the Fathers, by the several hours mentioned in this Parable,

rable, do understand the several Ages of Man, *viz.* child-hood, youth, middle-age, and old-age, wherein poor souls are called and converted to Christ; the scope of the Parable, is to signifie the free grace of God, in the calling of some in the spring and morning of their days, and in the calling of others in their old-age, and in the evening of their days. But, Gen. 12. 4. Joh. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4. ch. 7. 50.

2. *Abraham* in the Old Testament, and *Nicodemus* in the New, were called and converted in their old age, when there were but few steps, between them and the Grave, between them and Eternity.

I have read of one *Cajus Nearius Victorius*, who was an Old Man three hundred years after the Apostles time, and had been a Pagan all his days, and in his old age he enquired and harkened after Christ, and said he would be a Christian. *Simplicianus* hearing him say so, would not believe him, but when the Church saw a work of Grace indeed upon him, there was shouting

ſhouting and dancing for gladneſs, and Pſalms were ſung in every Church, *Cajus Nearius Victorius* is become a Chriſtian; And this was written for a wonder, that he in his old age, and in his gray-hairs, ſhould become a gracious Chriſtian.

Aretius alſo ſpeaks of a certain man in his time, it is no feigned ſtory, ſaith he, for I ſaw the man with my own eyes, he was one that had been a moſt vile and deſperate ſinner, a drunkard, a ſwearer, a wanton, a gameſter, and ſo he continued to his gray hairs; but at laſt it pleaſed God to ſet his ſins in order before him, and the man was ſo troubled in Conſcience, that he threw himſelf down unto the ground, calling upon Satan to take him away, provoking Satan to take him away; *Devil, take thine own, Devil, take thine own; I am thine own, take thine own;* whereupon (ſaith *Aretius*) prayer was made for him, Chriſtians prayed, they faſted and prayed, they

prayed

prayed night and day; and it pleased God at last, that this poor aged sinner revived, converted to God, lived a godly life afterwards, and died comfortably.

Therefore let not the gray-headed sinner despair, though his Spring be past, his Summer over-past, and be arrived at the Fall of the leaf.

3. Divine Promises shall be made good to returning Souls, to repenting souls, to believing souls, be they young or old, 2 *Chr.* 30. 9. *The Lord your God is gracious & merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if you return unto him,* Joel 2.13. *And rent your hearts and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.* Isa. 55. 7. *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return to the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon,* or he will multiply to pardon.

Isa. 1. 18. Jer. 3. 12. Isa. 43.22. to 26. ch. 57. 17, 18. Jer. 51. 5. Joh 3. 16. Mat. 16.16

pardon. More of this you may see by reading of the Scriptures in the Margent: all sorts of sin shall be pardoned to all sorts of believing and repenting sinners.

The *New Jerusalem* hath twelve Gates, to shew that there is every way access for all sorts and ranks of sinners, to come to Christ. He was born in an Inn, to shew that he receives all comers, Young and Old, Poor and Rich, *&c.* But,

4. The Lord hath declared by oath a greater delight in the conversion and salvation of poor sinners (whether they are young or old) than in the destruction and damnation of such, *Ezek.* 33.11. *As I live saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live:* Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die? O ye house of *Israel!* Two things make a thing more credible.

1. The quality or dignity of the person speaking.

2. The

2. The manner of the speech: now here you have the great God, not only speaking, promising, but solemnly swearing that he had rather poor sinners should live than die, be happy than miserable; therefore despair not, O aged sinner, but return unto the Lord, and thou shalt be happy for ever. But,

5. There is vertue enough in the precious blood of Jesus Christ, to wash and cleanse away all sin; not only to cleanse away the young mans sins, but also to cleanse away the old mans sins; not only to cleanse a sinner of twenty years old, but to cleanse a sinner of fifty, sixty, yea, a hundred years old, 1 *Joh.* 1. 17. *The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin:* not simply from sin, but from all sin; there is such a power and efficacie in the blood of Christ, as is sufficient to cleanse all sorts of sinners from all sorts of sins; there is vertue in the blood of the Lamb to wash out all the spots that are in the oldest sinners hearts; and therefore

Una guttula plus valet quam cœlum & terra, Luther. One little drop is more worth than Heaven and Earth.

fore let not old sinners despair, let not them say, there is no hope, there is no help, as long as this fountain of the Blood of Jesus Christ is open, for all sorts of sinners to wash in. But,

6. The call and invitations of Christ in the Gospel are general and indefinite, excluding no sort of sinners, *Rev.*3.20. *Behold, I stand at the door and knock, if any man* (mark the indefiniteness of personal admittance) *hear my voice & open the door, I will come in to him, & sup with him, and he with me.* Let the sinner be old or young; a green-head, or a gray-head, if he will but open the door, Christ will come in, and have communion and fellowship with him. So in that *Mat.* 11. 28. turn to these Scriptures, and dwell upon them, they all clearly evidence the Call and gracious Invitations of Christ to be to all sinners, to every sinner; he excepts not a man, no, though never so old, nothing shall hinder the sinner, any sinner, the worst and most aged sinner from

from obtaining mercy, if he be willing to open to Christ, and to receive him as his Lord and King, *Joh.6.37.* But,

7. Christs Pathetical lamentation over all sorts and ranks of sinners, declares his willingness to shew mercy to them; *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem* (saith Christ, weeping over it) *that thou hadst known in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace,* &c. *O that my people had harkened unto me!* Christ weeps over *Jerusalem*, so did *Titus*, and so did *Marcellus* over *Syracuse*, and so did *Scipio* over *Carthage*, but they shed tears for them, whose blood they were to shed, but Christ weeps over the necks of those young and old sinners, who were to shed his blood. As a tender-hearted Father weeps over his rebellious children, when neither smiles nor frowns, neither counsels nor intreaties will win them, or turn them from their evil ways, so doth Jesus Christ over those rebellious Jews upon whom nothing would work. But,

Luke 19. 41, 42. Psal. 81. 13.

Eighthly,

Pſal. 65. 1, 2. Rom. 10. 21.

Joh. 5. 2.

Eightly and laſtly, Though aged ſinners have given Chriſt many thouſand denials, yet he hath not taken them; but after all, and in the face of all denials, he ſtill reinforces his ſuit, and continues to beſeech them by his Spirit, by his Word, by his Wounds, by his Blood, by his Meſſengers, and by his Rebukes, to turn home to him, to embrace him, to believe in him, and to watch with him, that they may be ſaved eternally by him; all which beſpeaks gray-headed ſinners not to deſpair, nor to diſpute, but to repent, return, and believe, that it may go well with them for ever. Conſider ſeriouſly what hath been ſpoken, and the Lord make you wiſe for Eternity.

FINIS.

Imprimatur,

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